Minutes of the Meeting of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches

22 – 28 June 2016
Scandic Nidelven Hotel, Trondheim, Norway

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1. Opening Actions

1.1. Opening prayer

On Thursday, 23 June, the moderator of the central committee, Dr Agnes Abuom (Anglican Church of Kenya) and Rev. Marianne Brekken (Church of Norway), a member of the central committee, opened the meeting with prayers in English and Norwegian.

They gave thanks for the members who had arrived safely, and prayed to God to send God's Spirit to restore us, inspire us with God's love, and fill our hearts with peace, so that we can pour out our love.

1.2. Call to order and welcome

The moderator called the 63rd meeting of the central committee of the World Council of Churches (WCC) to order, and welcomed the central committee members and all other participants to the meeting.

The moderator called on Ms Tara Tautari (Methodist Church of New Zealand), the consensus facilitator, to lead the consensus orientation and review. Ms Tautari introduced the distributed booklet, "Achieving Consensus", and commended it for use as a resource document. She used the image of pilgrimage to explain how the WCC reached the point of adopting a consensus model as an alternative to a parliamentarian model of decision-making. This was done to enhance participation and dialogue in all meetings, and to limit the possibility of domination by any participant or small group, as well as to manage with courtesy, respect and grace discussions where participants bring deeply held, contending perspectives on matters at the heart of their Christian convictions. Sometimes this is not easy.

Consensus includes much more than procedures. Consensus comes to us as a clear challenge to seek the common mind of the meeting and engage in genuine respectful dialogue, while prayerfully discerning the will of God. Dialogue, discernment and prayer go hand in hand. Consensus is a way of being. The ethos and spirit of consensus are fundamental to how we come together at this meeting, listening, exploring and questioning, promoting collaboration and building consensus.

Consensus should not mean that everyone routinely agrees with proposals without debate, or that we have lost if our point of view does not prevail. Instead consensus occurs when there is agreement, or most of us can agree and others feel heard and do not oppose.

A hearing session allows for the exploration of a wide range of perspectives. No decisions are taken in a hearing session. A decision session is a time when only central committee members may speak, each speaker building on the insights from other contributors, discerning the common mind of the meeting on the way forward.

Ms Tautari then went on to explain the blue and orange cards which are meant to assist in the consensus process. She then introduced the procedures of speaking before explaining what happens if there is no consensus.

By referring to her Maori culture, where immense value is placed in the concept of relationship and contact between people face to face, she said that by taking the time and energy to travel and meet somebody you show honour to that person. She asked the meeting to be mindful of the use of technology during the meeting, as it can be a valuable resource, but also a distraction. Consensus-building demands our full presence in respect of the process and the work set before us and the people who have travelled so far to meet face to face.

She closed her presentation by saying that for consensus to flourish at this meeting we must bring all our gifts and be open for the gifts of others, allowing the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is an important task worthy of our focus and dedication.

The moderator thanked the consensus facilitator for her presentation.

1.3. Greeting from the Church of Norway

The moderator called on the Rt Rev. Helga Haugland Byfuglien, the presiding bishop of Church of Norway, to offer a word of welcome from the hosts.

Bishop Helga Byfuglien greeted the central committee and painted a picture of the Norwegian landscape. Until recently Norway was a rather homogenous society. Since the last archbishop had to flee the city in 1537, the Lutheran church has been the national religion of the country, and the king was the head of the church. This situation lasted till 2012. Today Norway is a secular society, but the Church of Norway remains a large church and important institution in the country. At the moment, the church is working to become a legally independent institution.

The work of the church on mission and diakonia is done in close collaboration with the many mission organisations and diaconal institutions in the country. The church's engagement in dialogue, inter-religiously and ecumenically, is an important task in a new time. We see a society that is becoming more and more multi-religious. Muslim and Roman Catholic communities are growing, so is the secular humanist movement. So, what are the main challenges for Church of Norway these days?

Society is getting more and more secularized, which is both positive and challenging. It can no longer be taken for granted that parents will bring their baby to baptism, even though 3.9 million people still choose to keep membership in the church. At the same time, this indicates that it is still important church belonging is still important for people, even if their faith may not be so great. This gives the church many opportunities to bring the Gospel to the people of Norway.

The Christian Council of Norway includes a broad representation of the churches in the country. Mutual confidence among the churches is growing, even if there are some difficult issues. The Council for Religious and Life Stance Communities is also an important umbrella for religious organizations in Norway. In addition, a number of bi-lateral dialogues are going on.

To be in solidarity with churches worldwide, to get to know and be with them, to share, to understand and to support each other are all increasingly important. In many ways ecumenism is coming closer to us, because the society in Norway is much more diverse than 20 years ago. The churches' answer to Jesus' prayer in John chapter 17, "that they all may be one", is also our prayer. And our answer is to join in the prayer, so that the world may believe. We are together in this pilgrimage. The Church of Norway wants to take responsibility and be part of this pilgrimage. Hosting you for this central committee meeting is a contribution to that. We are honoured to have you here in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. She then offered a blessing to guide the committee in its work.

The moderator thanked the presiding bishop and the Church of Norway for the hospitality, acknowledging the city of Trondheim as a place of pilgrimage. She said that there have been pilgrims making their way to Trondheim to share with us and called on Rev. Knut Refsdal, general secretary of the Christian Council of Norway to bring greetings.

1.4. Greetings by the general secretary of the Christian Council of Norway

Rev. Knut Refsdal, general secretary of the Christian Council of Norway, introduced a small group of pilgrims who started walking from Oslo on 24 May, arriving in Trondheim in the evening of 21 June. The aim of this pilgrimage was to make a statement against violent extremism, enemy pictures and hate speech. He had invited almost 30 religious leaders from all religions to join him on the journey or parts

of the journey – to talk, to walk, to meet. His hope is that this pilgrimage might be of importance in the local communities the group has visited along the way, as well as in Norway as such. He offered greetings to the central committee on behalf of the churches in Norway, and prayed that God may bless the meeting and their stay in Trondheim.

The Vice-Moderator, Bishop Dr Mary Ann Swenson (United Methodist Church) thanked Rev. Knut Refsdal for his story, and for sharing it along the way through pictures and stories.

1.5. Roll call and seating of substitutes and replacements

The moderator then called on the general secretary for the roll call and seating of substitutes.

The general secretary, Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit (Church of Norway), called the roll of the leadership of the central committee, presidents and members of the central committee (Doc. No. INF 02).

Apologies for absences had been received from a number of members. A list of persons was proposed as substitutes for voting members of the central committee for the entire meeting (Doc. No. INF 02).

The central committee approved by consensus to seat the substitutes as listed.

The general secretary announced a list of proposed persons to be seated as replacements (Doc . No GEN NOM 02 and GEN NOM 02 add.).

The central committee approved by consensus to seat the replacements as listed.

The general secretary then introduced Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia (Methodist Church in Kenya), former WCC general secretary (2004-2009). He also conveyed greetings from Rev. Dr Konrad Raiser (Evangelical Church in Germany), former WCC general secretary (1993-2003). He reminded the central committee that Rev. Dr Philip Potter (Methodist Church), former WCC general secretary (1972-1984), had passed away since the last time the central committee convened.

1.6. Agenda and timetable

The general secretary presented a proposed agenda and timetable.

The agenda and the timetable were approved by consensus.

1.7. Minutes of the previous meetings

The moderator, Dr Agnes Abuom (Anglican Church in Kenya) presented the minutes of the 62nd meeting of the WCC central committee, 2-9 July 2014 in Geneva, Switzerland.

Dr Audeh B. Quawas (Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem) said that the minutes were posted in June 2016, i.e. two years after the meeting took place. He asked that the minutes not be sent any later than 6 months after the meeting has been held.

It was moved that the minutes should be distributed within six months after a central committee meeting.

The central committee accepted the move by consensus.

The central committee approved the minutes of the 62nd Central Committee meeting by consensus.

1.8. Standing committees of the central committee

The general secretary drew the attention of the central committee members to the Doc. No. GEN 04 Committees of the Central Committee. He introduced a list of proposed committee members, including names of their respective moderators and rapporteurs, recommended by the executive committee.

Mrs Anne Glynn-Mackoul (Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East, USA) made a note that there are almost twice as many advisers as members to the Policy Reference Committee. The general secretary thanked her for the concern, and said that the moderator of the group should be aware of this, and ask the members to engage themselves, while encouraging the advisors to take more of a listening role.

The central committee approved the committee membership by consensus.

1.9. Welcome to the Stewards

The general secretary went on to welcome the stewards, fifteen young people from the Nordic and Baltic countries (and including people living in Nordic countries from Russia, Albania and El Salvador) and asked them to step up on the podium. He thanked them for their time and dedication to the central committee meeting, and to the ecumenical movement, wishing them a good experience.

The moderator, Dr Agnes Abuom, added her thanks to the stewards before the general secretary shared announcements.

2. Report of the executive committee

The vice-moderator, Bishop Dr Mary Ann Swenson presented the Report of the Executive Committee (Doc. No. GEN 02). She explained how everything the executive committee has done has somehow been related to the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace. She said that the executive committee has been careful with the distinctive roles and mandates of the central committee and the executive committee. The report also gives witness to the building of strong relationships, presents a clear list of decisions and describes how the sub-committees have been working. Five meetings of the executive committee have been held, and the next meeting is planned for November 2016, in China. She then took the central committee through the five chapters of the report.

The central committee received the report of the executive committee.

3. Moderator's address

The vice-moderator, H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima (Ecumenical Patriarchate), welcomed the members to the next session and announced the beginning of the session as a hearing session, before moving into decision.

He welcomed Professor Peder Borgen from Norway, a youth delegate at the very first WCC Assembly in Amsterdam in 1948, the Rt Rev. Dr Gunnar Stålsett, former general secretary of the Lutheran World Federation, and a number of dignitaries. He then asked the moderator, Dr Agnes Abuom (Anglican Church in Kenya), to present her address.

Dr Abuom opened her address (Appendix I) by greeting the central committee and giving thanks for the care she has received after the death of her husband. She also gave thanks for the hospitality of the Church of Norway for hosting the meeting.

Following the presentation of the report, the vice-moderator, H.E. Metropolitan Gennadios of Sassima, thanked the moderator for her speech and opened the floor for questions and comments.

Rev. Dr Sharon Watkins (Christian Church [Disciples of Christ] in the United States) expressed her great appreciation for the remarks, and special appreciation on behalf of the churches in the United States for the WCC solidarity visit (April 2016), saying that "you have seen our struggle, and you have spoken to it well, and you have shown solidarity". Two other executive committee members also were able to

organize their schedules to be part of the visit. They look forward to continuing to address the issues raised in partnership. The issue of racism is an issue that must be addressed in partnership, worldwide, and theologically. WCC must assume and understand its important historical role in this regard.

Rev. Dr Henriette Hutabarat-Lebang (Toraja Church, Indonesia) expressed her appreciation of the presentation by the moderator, which gave insights and food for thought. She particularly noted paragraph 24, asking how we move together to be an inclusive, ecumenical community. She remarked on the role of the regional ecumenical organisations and the national councils of churches. There is always a need to assess the landscape in a specific area, such as region and country. There is a common global challenge, but also specific local and regional challenges. It is therefore very important to develop joint programmes in a spirit of partnership.

Rev. Dr Sofia Camnerin (Uniting Church in Sweden) thanked the moderator for the reminder of the shared responsibility we have, also in the North and the West. To bring up racism, sexism and other issues, linking these to the root causes for the migrant crises is important, reminding us of God's justice, and lifting up the sanctity of all life. We are called to repentance, together with all people, in the cross and resurrection of Christ.

Mr Thomas Hyeono Kang (Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil) thanked the moderator for her holistic approach. He pointed to paragraph 15 on racism, acknowledging the importance of challenging racism in the United States of America. He wanted to underline that racism is also a global issue. As an example he mentioned Brazil, where there are violations of the rights of people of colour every day. Nobody knows about it, because marginalised populations lack a political voice – the more important it is for churches to acknowledge these. Secondly, Mr Kang pointed to the introduction of the stewards. He was a steward himself in 2006, which is how he began his walk in the ecumenical movement. He expressed sadness over the fact that the stewards are all from this sub-region. While understanding that this is due to financial conditions, it is still a sensitive point.

Ms Teny Pirri-Simonian (Armenian Apostolic Church [Holy See of Cilicia]) said that the moderator's address had taken her back to the time when she started working in the ecumenical movement, because the moderator used the kind of invitational language and commitment at that time. She highlighted that empowerment of the churches locally is most important, but that it is challenging to empower our local churches to become advocates in their own regions, and to be a voice to the world. Her plea was that the programme committee look at the programmes not as something coming from above, but as something that can grow from the bottom upwards.

H.E. Metropolitan Eustahtius Matta Roham (Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East) thanked the moderator for her rich speech addressing many issues on justice and peace. He particularly emphasized the question of how we can hold hands together, where there are other Christians and other groups, so as to strengthen our witness to the world.

Rev. Prof Dr Fernando Enns (Mennonite Church in Germany) thanked the moderator for her analysis and leadership, also considering her family hardships. He asked that we not use the language of "Martin Luther's reformation", since there are many churches of the reformation. He particularly addressed paragraph 12 and the logic of violence and war and countries who export weapons. With shame he wanted to say that Germany should be on the list, as the third largest exporter of weapons. The churches are working against this. He also pointed to paragraph 15 on racism, which is an issue still dividing the churches. After the shootings in Orlando, what are the churches saying about the fact that those killings were directed against LGBTQI persons? It should be included when we talk about the biased justice of God.

Mr Padi Rex R. B. Reyes, Jr (Episcopal Church in the Philippines) noted that in the address there is no single reference to Indigenous Peoples. For the last three days Indigenous People met in Trondheim, and

two resolutions will come from this meeting to the central Ccommittee. He asked that attention be paid to these.

Rev. Silishebo Silishebo (United Church of Zambia) referred to the mention of cross-bridging the stewards, and that he would second that idea strongly. He thanked the moderator for the heartfelt speech, also about the work against trafficking, especially of young people. At the border with Namibia, he had witnessed young people from 4-7 years of age among persons passing in a corridor of human trafficking. Four girls and three boys were intercepted, destined for Namibia. He could not believe it and pleaded that the churches open our eyes and ears. There is so much happening in the African region, we are being used as a corridor. Let us make a difference.

Rev. Dr Cornelia Füllkrug-Weitzel (Evangelical Church in Germany) thanked the moderator and highlighted a couple of points. The courageous way of responding to the influx of refugees in Europe indeed showed that there was a huge amount of hospitality; it is true however that much more can be done. Nationalism is increasing in Europe, partly due to the reception of many refugees; it is therefore crucial that we fight for their right to live in our midst as long as they need to live there. Secondly, she pointed out that financial institutions and corporate houses show a new recognition of religion as a potential power, and there may be a threat that churches are co-opted for this. This needs the attention of the WCC.

The moderator, Dr Agnes Abuom thanked the central committee members for their responses. Taking note of all the issues raised, she highlighted a few. On the issue of recruiting stewards, she thinks the leadership needs to address cross-bridging. She also noted the comment on the reformation being more that Lutheran, referring to her own experience as an Anglican. Finally, she acknowledged that the issue of LGBTQI should be taken note of.

The central committee received the moderator's address by consensus.

The vice-moderator, H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima stated that the document would be referred to the committees of the central committee for further reflection.

4. Greetings from Norway's Minister of Culture

The vice-moderator, Bishop Dr Mary Ann Swenson, welcomed members to the session and announced that it would begin as a hearing session, and then move to a decision session.

The moderator, Dr Agnes Abuom, and the general secretary, Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, welcomed the Minister of Culture in Norway, Her Excellency, Linda Cathrine Hofstad Helleland, and invited her to bring greetings.

Ms Helleland welcomed the central committee to Norway and Trondheim, and Nidarosdomen (the Cathedral), which is an important site of pilgrimage. Rev. Knut Refsdal walked on a pilgrimage from Oslo to Trondheim together with people of different beliefs, and with central committee members. Pilgrimage is a search for peace, but it is also about openness to change. We do not ignore our past or our differences; but instead use them to search for our common journey towards peace and the future. The WCC's Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace reminds us that we cannot separate society from religion. We often see that religion is being used to justify injustice and violence. We have to resist this, but even more, we need to move together.

She said that the Norwegian government supports this meeting here in Trondheim for this reason. Through your work for peace among Christians and Muslims, through dialogue in the Middle East, and now in Nigeria, you help the world. This corresponds to minister of culture's mandate, to help build a better Norway and a sustainable future. We need to learn how to live together with our differences. We

have to help our brothers and sisters to be part of our community. In order to reach these goals we need culture, sports, libraries etc., and we need good neighbourhoods. In this, we also need the support of religious communities, interfaith dialogue and religious leaders who work and move together, to help in what we call everyday integration.

The refugee crisis we see in Europe has made it more important, but it is not the only reason for engaging in dialogue. Norway has become a multi-faith society. Therefore we regulate our religious affairs. The first steps are to separate church and state in this country. But we have to move further. We have to make one coherent law for all religious communities. We have to look at all sides of this, and it must be an open and inclusive process. Different voices need to be heard.

This year the Council for Religious and Life Stance communities in Norway celebrated its 20th anniversary. The aim of the council is to achieve mutual respect through dialogue. We need partners like this council in this process as in other processes, because religions are never irrelevant for society, if changes are to be sustainable. I would like to cite what Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit said in February: "If we are to build a sustainable future, we need to acknowledge both the positive and the problematic side of religion. We need religious leaders who can address this, and who can communicate with the outside world. We need religious leaders who can push for and seek change, in the way the pilgrim seeks change." The work you are doing through WCC cannot be valued enough, as you call out for justice and peace. I hope your call is being heard, loud and clear, so that we can start moving together. She wished the group a pleasant stay in Trondheim, and good luck on the pilgrimage towards justice and peace.

The vice-moderator, Rev. Dr Mary Ann Swenson thanked H.E. Ms Helleland and called on the general secretary to present his report.

5. Report of the General Secretary

Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, general secretary, delivered his report, Doc. No. GEN 03 A Fellowship of Living Hope (see Appendix II). He finished his presentation by inviting the floor to join in the concluding prayer:

> *God of life, together we give thanks for the living hope we are given.*
> *Give us the wisdom and the courage to give an account of this hope*
> *wherever you call us to be,*
> *in our pilgrimage for justice and peace!*

The vice-moderator, Rev. Dr Mary Ann Swenson, opened the floor for questions and comments.

Rev. Cora Luisa Antonio Matamoros (Moravian Church in Nicaragua) thanked the general secretary for the wonderful report. She felt encouraged in a pastoral way. On behalf of indigenous women she congratulated the general secretary for speaking against violence against women. Also, she wanted to challenge the general secretary about food and what the churches are we to do when people do not even have food.

Rev. Prof. Dr Renta Nishihara (Anglican Church in Japan) gave thanks to the general secretary for his report, and also for the WCC visits to Hiroshima and Nagasaki. These visits were crucial, and took place at a historic moment, not only for the churches, but also for the peace movement. In 2014 Rev. Prof. Dr Sang Chang (Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea), WCC President for Asia, was sent to Tokyo and met with a representative of the government. She handed over our document on nuclear war. It was a meaningful meeting from the standpoint of communicating to the Japanese government from Christians around the globe, indicating what Christians are doing all over the world, and watching the developments. Rev. Dr Mary Ann Swenson confirmed the commitment to ending nuclear weapons.

Rev. Karin van den Broeke (Protestant Church in the Netherlands) expressed that this had been an impressive moment of the pilgrimage, indeed. She also thanked the general secretary for his words and the work done. Referring to his conclusion about the way forward, she said that in 1948 churches said that we stay together. In 2013 WCC said that we move together. She suggested having an event in 2018 at the place where it all started, both to commemorate the past and to celebrate the future. This could mark a new step of the pilgrimage, rooted in peace. She invited the central committee to the Netherlands, and proposed that this possibility be discussed later.

Rev. Dr Samson Olasupo Adeniyi Ayokunle (Nigerian Baptist Convention) thanked the general secretary for the initiative and commitment to establish a Christian-Muslim Centre in Nigeria to go along with and help solving the problems in his community.

Rev. Prof. Dr Jerry Pillay (Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa) thanked the general secretary for framing the speech in the context of hope. He then noted that in both reports the issue of racism has become a significant issue. He spoke about the resurgence of racism in South Africa. Sadly, racism is still a significant topic and theme today, 20 years and more after apartheid. We need to construct a society in a non-racist world. If that can become a programme thought, it can help heal the world.

Rev. Gloria Ulloa Alvarado (Presbyterian Church of Colombia) expressed her gratitude for the speech. She thanked the general secretary for how conflicts in Latin America – Brazil, Chile, Colombia and Nicaragua – have been addressed through the WCC pilgrimage. In this pilgrimage it is important to reflect upon what the churches can contribute to peace. It is very critical that this process of dialogue continue in order to bring peace in Colombia.

Bishop Yona Mwesigwa Katoneene (Church of Uganda) said that he comes from a country where the concept of pilgrimage is lived almost every year, because it is a country where many Christians were killed for their faith in Christ 150 years ago. This has been commemorated this since 2009, so annually many people walk by foot, and it is amazing to see all the people walking to Kampala. The challenge before us is to continue to move forward with faith. He referred to a statement of the moderator that we must make the pilgrimage more relevant and inspiring for young people, and for women. If the pilgrimage is to have a significant meaning; stories need to be told in different countries, stories of people who have worked so hard, even died, for peace. The 400 kilometre walk to Kampala is one of these inspiring stories.

Rev. Dr Endor Modeste Rakoto (Malagasy Lutheran Church) expressed his appreciation of the report. He wished to highlight diakonia within the WCC, which is really valuable to his church, and which they will emphasise more and more. We are moving towards justice and peace, and diakonia is useful in this regard. Another question was about the funding from the Act Alliance, and whether it would be possible to distinguish between and identify how much funding comes from the church, and how much from NGOs, governments etc., in order to measure how much we as churches are involved in diakonia, showing our engagement to do good work.

Bishop Dr Chibuzo Raphael Opoko (Methodist Church Nigeria) gave thanks for the living hope of the report, which is reassuring. He comes from a context where people in the north and the south live in danger every day. The activities of Boko Haram, the young girls who were kidnapped many years ago, Biafra, the blowing up of oil facilities – desperation and fear are everywhere. He said that the report of the general secretary is reassuring. As Christians and church leaders we need to do more advocacy, to be the voice of the voiceless. Silence in the face of evil is in itself evil. Not to speak is to speak, not to act is to act. This speech calls us to rise to act. He thanked the general secretary for the solidarity with Nigeria.

The general secretary thanked the members for their questions and comments, and said that most of the comments were for our common reflection. The invitation to Amsterdam in 2018 will be discussed.

He also said that the WCC Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (WCC EAA) focuses both on HIV/AIDS and on access to food. The HIV/AIDS situation cannot be solved only by providing medicine, but includes provision of food and basic needs, as well as work against stigma. This holistic perspective is what guides us. Racism is a call for us to reflect upon, it is a challenge we share, but also where we can make a difference, and we need to look into how we can mobilise resources to do that. We have an opportunity to use the pilgrimage as a way to share our stories, this means that it will become more important to look into the way we communicate together, and really find a way to share our stories.

The central committee received the report of the general secretary by consensus.

6. Spiritual Life

6.1. Pilgrimage walk to the Cathedral

Rev. Einar Vegge (Church of Norway) was invited to share information on the short pilgrimage walk to the opening worship at Nidaros Cathedral. He said that during the procession they would try to explain what a pilgrimage of justice and peace could mean for people in Trondheim. Music and good company would remind us of the beauty of creation. The wounds would also be visted, and the mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion in the city. We should try to open ourselves to transformation, trusting ourselves to the healing power of God.

The central committee participated in a short pilgrimage walk through the city, towards the Nidaros Cathedral, stopping for a moment of prayer in the middle of town.

6.2. Opening worship and reception

The opening worship took place in the Nidaros Cathedral, with the presence of members from the Norwegian royal family, their Royal Highnesses, Crown Prince Haakon and H.E. Crown Princess Mette-Marit. Bishop Helga Haugland Byfuglien presided and Bishop Mark MacDonald (Anglican Church of Canada) gave the sermon.

The worship was followed by a reception at the Archbishop´s Palace, hosted by the mayor of Trondheim, Ms Rita Ottervik. Ms Ottervik welcomed the members of the royal family, the WCC central committee, observers and guests to Trondheim, a city of pilgrimage since medieval times.

Dr Agnes Abuom thanked the mayor for the hospitality of the city, and highlighted this meeting in Trondheim as an important milestone in the Pilgrimage for Justice and Peace.

6.3. Common Prayers and Bible Studies

Afternoon prayers were held at the Bakke Church on 24 June (ecumenical tradition) and 25 June (Orthodox tradition of Artoklasia, the blessing of bread, wine, oil and grains).

Bible studies were held on 23-25 and 27-28 June 2016 in the conference (plenary) hall as follows:

- Rev. Gloria Ulloa Alvarado (Presbyterian Church of Colombia) on Matthew 7: 21-29
- Rev. Dr Sathianathan Clarke (Church of South India) on John 13: 1-17
- Rev. Dr Binsar Pakpahan (Huria Kristen Batak Protestan, Indonesia) on Isaiah 54:1-10
- Rev. Martina Victorie Kopecká (Czechoslovak Hussite Church) on Mark 10: 13-16
- Rev. Prof. Dr Jerry Pillay (Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa) on Genesis 12: 1-9 and Hebrews 13: 1-3

On Sunday, 26 June, participants in the central committee were invited to join local congregations and participated in services in the Lutheran, Anglican, Methodist, Pentecostal and Eastern Orthodox traditions.

On Tuesday, 28 June, at the Church of Our Lady, at the city centre, the closing prayer took place at the conclusion of the meeting. Metropolitan Dr Mor Geevarghese Coorilos (Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East [India]) provided the sermon.

7. Plenaries

7.1. Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace

On Thursday, 23 June, the hearing session started with a short film about the WCC Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace.

Dr Agnes Abuom moderated the session and introduced the first panel session on the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace. She reminded the house that the central committee had come together to share experiences and listen to the diverse voices. The objective of the plenary was not to take decisions, but to be a hearing session, an experiential session, to listen, share and inspire, as we continue our journey. She introduced Rev. Prof. Dr Fernando Enns (Mennonite Church in Germany), co-moderator of the reference group on the pilgrimage, who would share a report on the work of the reference group. The session would include testimonies from different participants on how they have engaged with the pilgrimage so far, as well as sharing of experiences to carry forward with us. The aim is to discern what God is saying to us during this pilgrimage.

Dr Enns started by citing the Rt Rev. Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury: "Place works on the pilgrim – that´s what pilgrimage is for." He said that, on this journey, he had discovered how much there is to receive, reflect, listen and discern before continuing our common journey. He then introduced the reference group by asking them to stand up. He continued to reflect on the saying "Place works on the pilgrim", as the group itself went to Jerusalem and Beit Jala. The "via positiva" was the celebration of gifts; the pool of Bethesda, the place where people still come to seek healing. The group was amazed by the gifts of the holy sites and the place's marvellous diversity of people. The "via negativa", the Via Dolorosa was the suffering of those who live in Jerusalem, the wounds and the tension that is present, the separation wall, the tear gas, and listening to the frustrations of Christians, Jews and Muslims alike. The group did indeed visit some of the wounds of the Holy Land. The Ecumenical Water Network's Seven Weeks of Water is an initiative that comes from thirst. That leads us to the "via transformativa", aiming at transforming the injustices. The members of the group were transformed themselves by the courageous witness of the pilgrims who resisted the temptation of hatred and violence. Pilgrimage is discipleship, to find God on the way – in the most God-forsaken places. Discipleship is about who we are – the qualifier of the pilgrimage.

Pilgrimage, is about being *with*. In many places to walk is the same as being alive. To walk is to live. Pilgrimage is not about perfect ideas, but about the joy and struggle of being with others. The kind of pilgrimage we are on is the way of the cross. When you stand in front of the wall in Jerusalem, you can feel the violence it produces. You can feel the injustice and suffering of the oppressed, the discriminated. Those are the ones who have to take the lead in our pilgrimage. Pilgrimage takes us to the centre of the God-forsakenness, the way of the cross. We believe that transformation is possible. pilgrimage and unity are about moving together. We will not stare paralyzed at the final goal of visible unity, but we will be part of the growing of community, which takes place when we listen, forgive each other and allow each other to be healed.

Dr Enns went on to present the focus of 2017, which will be on Africa and peace building in the context of religion and violence. Nigeria will be a special focus. Projects that are proposed by the theological study group include a booklet of Bible studies, a book with writings on the Lord's Prayer, the WCC´s pilgrimage blog, and guidelines for a 'good' pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

Dr Abuom thanked the moderator of the reference group and invited voices from different constituencies to come to the panel. Indigenous, climate change, migration and refugees and racism.

Indigenous Peoples: Rev. Dr Tore Johnsen (Church of Norway), the moderator of the Indigenous People´s reference group started by citing Elie Wiesel: "The greatest enemy we know is not hate, but indifference". Dr Johnsen went on to say that the greatest enemy to truth is not the straight forward life, but invisibility. That is the place where systemic injustice thrives. The invisibility of Indigenous Peoples is a direct result of a strategy of those who colonize our lands. As an example, Norway never was a purely Norwegian ethnic country, the Sami people have been in the country for 12,000 years and as much as 40% of the country is traditional Sami lands. Natural resources continue to flow from indigenous lands into the power centre of the majority society. It is a system developed over hundreds of years. Unfortunately churches have been part of this, and it has resulted in self-destruction and apathy. Some of us have become invisible even to ourselves. We saw ourselves as ugly, inferior and not worth loving. My Norwegian mother told me that my father had asked if it really was good enough for you to marry a Sami. And Sami language was for a long time forbidden in school.

So, what does a pilgrimage of justice and peace look like in a context like this? This was at the heart of the conference, taking place here in Trondheim just prior to the central committee meeting. We do not wish reconciliation to come to us as cheap grace. He then offered the statement from the Indigenous People's conference representatives to the central committee.

Climate Justice: Dr John Nduna, general secretary of ACT Alliance, started by showing a short film, before his presentation on the situation in Africa. Africa is one of the regions where climate change has been very devastating. In places where people survive on agriculture, drought is devastating. Life dies where you live and that is the situation for those who have been affected by the severe effects of climate change. Churches and organization have come together, to walk together. The key engagements are for deep reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, support for communities and peoples to adapt to the impacts of climate change, and mobilisation of resources to ensure climate action in developing countries.

Dr Nduna then shared a story of a cycling caravan setting off from Nairobi. These young people, women and men went through a lot of challenges, sometimes food and water were a problem, but they persevered. The joy comes when justice is done. So, the churches and ACT Alliance have been working with people in order to help them adapt to the situation. At COP 21 1.8 million signatures were submitted. Without the ecumenical family we would not have received such a result. He thanked the churches and the ecumenical organisations in Africa for this support.

Europe and migrants: Fr Heikki Huttunen, general secretary of the Conference of European Churches (CEC), related his input directly to the effects of climate change in Africa. There is a need for *metanoia* – a change of heart, a change of ways. There is an on-going pilgrimage by others into Europe, the pilgrimage from the margins. This pilgrimage from the margins demands a change of mind and of heart in the Europeans. European institutions are committing sins. The first sin is not to allow people to enter our fortress. It is a sin, because it has resulted in tens of thousands of lost lives. The second sin is that not everyone will be allowed to stay, although not everyone will be able to return. Therefore, are we allowing second class citizens? These sins are so serious that we need the churches to say it aloud and call the authorities to action. Our children and grandchildren will ask us if we knew and how we allowed it to happen.

We speak of a refugee crisis in Europe but the figures show fewer than one million people. There are places where people live in conditions where human solidarity is lacking, but we need to compare the numbers with the numbers in other places, e.g. the millions in the Middle East and in sub-Saharan Africa. There are 60 million refugees in the world. So, if we compare, we get some relativity to the numbers. There is no refugee crisis in Europe but there is a crisis, a deep moral crisis, where a pilgrimage

of repentance is needed. Churches like mine are raising their voices against the authorities. There are people in the grass-root movement receiving people. Churches are active, both in helpful countries, but also in countries that are more hostile. As a global ecumenical movement we need to work together. Cheap grace does not help. This is a costly repentance.

Black Lives Matter: Rev. Waltrina Middelton (United Church of Christ, Black Lives Matter) opened by saying: "We who believe in freedom cannot rest". She told the story of a difficult personal pilgrimage of the past five years, experiencing actions of violence against African Americans in the USA. She said that we have carried the weight of moral injury. A child was shot by two Cleveland officers. His older sister was hand cuffed while he was lying, bleeding to death. This is moral injury. A young woman watched her mother being killed. There are many more examples of moral injuries. A 23 year old committed suicide as a result of witnessing incessant violence against blacks without any cause. No one has been held accountable to the murder of these lives. Faith leaders must join in standing up against this.

As human beings we are part of a great diabolic community, there is urgency to transform systems. How can we work together to hold each other accountable for legislative laws and moral human behaviour? People have a number of rights. How can we share in this sacred work, so that the victimised will not be further victimized, and abandon the church? forty years ago a black man taught us how to do this, when he testified. Rev. Dr Martin Luther King did this when he said: "Then I just want to do God's will, and God has allowed me to go to the mountain…and God has allowed me to see the Promised Land".

A pilgrimage discerning the landscapes together is timely. It is my hope today, to mobilise African diaspora ecumenical faith communities, addressing the critical needs of our sacred landscapes. Black lives matter. From here to there in the US, black lives matter! I cannot say that all black lives matter. We have our human dignity and our resistance to systems of oppression, but I must unapologetically declare that black lives matter until it becomes true that they do not. Ms Middleton gave another example of the murder of a family, beautiful human beings, because of the colour of their skin. This was an act of white supremacy terror. She said that when she started this pilgrimage, it began as a witness in solidarity, but now she shares in bereavement. Who will share this grief? Who will we meet on the roadside, who shall we invite to share the road? It was the stranger that taught us that we must walk the road and discern the landscape together. Let us not observe from the side-line. Is there enough faith to make space for the other on the journey? Who walks alongside the road with you? Will your heart burn within? This is a Kairos moment; we must sing the song: black lives matter!

The moderator summed up the four witnesses and invited the central committee to go into buzz groups and ask themselves: is our reconciliation cheap grace? She gave the group three questions related to the experience of the pilgrimage of justice and peace. After group work, she opened the floor for feedback.

Dr Fransina Yoteni (Gereja Kristen Injili Di Tanah Papua) asked whether we could come to a definition of the pilgrimage of justice and peace, a word, from the four witnesses that had spoken today. She also inquired about where the Pacific fits into the future planning, more specifically Papua, which is threatened.

Rev. Marianne Brekken (Church of Norway) highlighted the need for building bridges, bridges in different ways. Bridges to the future, bridges to heal wounds from the history to build a future, but also bridges between people.

Dr Theodora Issa (Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East) referred to the genocides happening in Syria and Iraq and the need for visiting the wounds, because last year 100 years of genocide was commemorated, but people continue to be victims of genocide. These people do not want temporary solutions. They want to stop the destruction of their lands. Christians are part of the tapestry of the Middle East. If they leave, it will be a loss for the region.

Rt Rev. Arnold Temple (Methodist Church Sierra Leone) said that we need to be working together. We visited the wounds, as for example during the Ebola crisis, which has such a great impact on people today; we celebrate the end of it, but we visit the wounds it caused.

Ms. Torill Edøy (Church of Norway, EDAN) asked why people with disabilities were not part of the theme. The number of disabled people is growing group due to wars. Why are we not given space? We are experiencing increasing exclusion. We are experiencing exclusion from the plenary.

Rev. Michel Charbonnier (Waldensian Church, Italy) highlighted hope. He said that the churches are experiencing transformation. The work in Nigeria is taking place, thanks to the Busan Assembly. Albania is another example. Transformation of injustice is taking place through safe passages to Europe through Italy. It does not tackle the structural problem, but it is still a sign of hope.

Rev. Prof. Dr Jerry Pillay (Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa) said that struggles are perpetuated by inequalities, we cannot succeed if we do not address inequalities. This should be a strong word in the pilgrimage.

Rev. Dr Angelique Walker-Smith (National Baptist Convention USA, Inc.) highlighted the words witness and solidarity. These need to be emphasized in order to be transforming injustices. The pan-African Women of Faith have taken on a spiritual pilgrimage, which involves lament and work for justice.

Rev. Canon Aida Consuelo Sanchez-Navarro (The Episcopal Church, Honduras) suggested security as an important word for the pilgrimage. We have different things that we have put into action in Latin America; the struggle for a culture of peace among young people and women, through transforming unjust structures in our societies. It is not only a question of limited resources, but a struggle that goes beyond that. We need to empower young people and women. Our dream is to continue this transformation through a culture of peace and justice and to make all marginalised people visible. For us the pilgrimage means solidarity with vulnerable groups.

Dr Abuom concluded the session saying that we will continue this journey. The whole concept of invisibility needs to be addressed. We want to be inclusive and engage with everyone. Our sister from Papua is alluding to “us not being seen”. The presence of people from the Pacific is necessary. The presence of people living with disability was also raised. She apologized for any feeling of exclusion in the plenary. People experience life dying while they are still alive. In this pilgrimage we would give hope to the hopeless, we would restore life. But we need to walk together. We need to be sharing our landscapes. In this plenary we did share a little bit. We need to continue to find ways where we can share our stories of pain. But we also need to share our stories of transformation and celebration. I invite all of us to share our narratives, and to enter into each other´s landscapes, mentally and spiritually and in prayer.

Dr Fernando Enns was invited to lead the plenary in a moment of silence and prayer.

7.2. Unity

On Friday, 24 June, in a hearing session, Prof. Dr Mary Anne Plaatjies Van Huffel (Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa), WCC President for Africa, introduced the panel. She invited Rev. Dr Odair Pedroso Mateus, Director of Faith and Order, to the stage.

Dr Pedroso Mateus introduced the topic. Many of the issues that prevent us from reaching visible unity and from celebrating the Lord’s Supper, or the Eucharist, together, depend on the way in which we understand the church and what we mean by church. The wider and deeper we go into looking at the church, the closer we come to the question of the Holy Communion. The document “The Church-Towards a Common Vision” was written by theologians from different countries, churches and Christian traditions. These can be conflicting with regard to the question of what the church is and its mission in today’s world. What can we say together about the church of Christ so that we may grow in a real,

though imperfect, communion, so that we may overcome our past and present divisions? The theologians did their job, and they did it well. Now it is up to our churches to respond to this document and to say how they may establish closer relationships with other churches who recognize themselves in the description of the church, as described in the document. This is a question of spiritual ecumenism. It is a dialogue about being humble and letting others discover elements of holiness, of catholicity, that may have been preserved in other churches despite our differences. Implicit agreements may become explicit. Mutual vulnerability may be experienced together by all of us. Mutual intercession, mutual support may become a pressing need for all of us, and mutual accountability may be strengthened. This is spiritual ecumenism, and a constituting element of our pilgrimage on justice and peace. As the churches respond to the common vision and the common fellowship, like the Eastern Orthodox churches are doing in Greece today. It is urgent to remember that fathers and mothers of the reformation never saw themselves as being outside the one catholic church, and taught us to relate to the one, catholic church as our mother in faith.

Prof. Dr Marina Kolovopoulou (Church of Greece), member of the Faith and Order Commission, was invited to introduce the process of discussing questions in the framework of the multilateral dialogue on the Nature and Mission of the Church. The Faith and Order Commission came up with the document "The Church – Towards a Common Vision" as a result. She introduced the chapters and subdivisions of the document.

While the text does not express full consensus, it nevertheless expresses how far the Christian community has come in common statements. In this perspective, the answer to our main question: "what do we mean by church?" belongs to all who have received the text. The question challenges them to look at their theological understanding of themselves as churches. Ecclesiology is difficult because church is an aspect of life, and is life in itself. We cannot define life in a strict and narrow sense. We can have countless descriptions of the church and that is why we use metaphors and figures of speech. We experience the church through the true witness of life in Christ. Faith and life are connected. This explains the difficulty of presenting a document like the one in front of you. As mentioned in the report of the general secretary, one reason for trust and stability is that at least some parts of our landscape remains the same. The landscape of ecclesiology gives us some of the needed entry points into understanding ourselves, and can be considered issues for guidance and further studies into a deeper understanding of the various Christian traditions. Through our clarity and sincerity in stating faith, we clear the ground for the direction we take for the future. If someone smashes a golden coin and scatters it in the field, would it be possible to collect the coin and recreate it? It would be an impossible task if I don't know the form of the coin. The document "The Church" is like that; can we find the golden piece? We are happy because our coin is found in the beginning of the church, and therein lies our history. We are talking about pilgrimage, we need the way to walk on. Therefore we can be talking about truth. We have to testify the truth of our faith, we offer our life that testifies to our faith in our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Very Rev. Dr Sheilagh Kesting (Church of Scotland) introduced the work of the joint commission between the Church of Scotland and the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland, co-chaired by Rev. Dr. Alan Falconer and Fr. Manuel Conti. In order to give an ecumenical response to an ecumenical document, the commission set out to provide a joint response to "The Church". It was a difficult task. There was a broad common welcoming of the document, but then there were two parallel responses. We persevered and in the end succeeded in agreeing to a joint text, which was sent back to our churches, in order to look at our own traditions. All were reminded of previous ecumenical texts from the Faith and Order Commission and from other ecumenical bodies. When considering the text as a basis for growth in unity, we regret that the churches were not asked to go further than to present parallel understandings. The document itself presented a challenges of its own, namely that we are called to name our faith together as sisters and brothers in Christ. We need encouragement to seek a way forward together, to a degree that is possible. In our conclusion we touched areas that require further

work. The joint commission said that we need challenges and "The Church"-document is helpful by flagging up areas in which we can do further thinking, e.g. how far do the churches go in reflecting the Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry document? This challenge we endorse as we look forward to further reflection, increasing our ecumenical sensitive as we dig deeper.

Rev. Fr. Andrzej Choromanski (Roman Catholic Church) was invited to present what the Roman Catholic Church is doing to respond to the document. He started by giving warm greetings from Cardinal Kurt Koch, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCPCU), and Mgr. Brian Farrell, Secretary of the PCPCU, who both were attending the Orthodox Council in Crete at the time of the central committee meeting. The document "The Church" is an important document on the way to full unity of the church. There is no way of reaching this goal without having a vision of what the church is and what church unity is. A common vision is essential. We are most happy and pleased that finally, after decades, the Faith and Order Commission has come to the point of a convergence statement on the church.

The Roman Catholic Church started to prepare an official response in 2013. There are many stages in this formulating this response, some have been done, and some will still be done. There have been internal consultations within the PCPCU with experts about methodology. It was decided to ask qualified experts from all over the world to comment on the text. After a process of discernment, fifteen theologians were asked to send their comments. The task was not only to answer the questions in the introduction of the document, but also to read the text from the point of view of catholic ecclesiology as expressed in Vatican II and in the post-conciliar magisterium. We have received valuable responses in this process. Then there was another meeting in our Council. At that point it was said that it is not enough with individual responses, we also need official comments from episcopal conferences. Two letters were sent to episcopal conferences all over the world, with the purpose of providing dissemination of the text, and also asking for comments. At the same time, we identified councils in different places, and sent another letter with more precise questions. Now we are waiting for these official responses, and hope to have them before the end of the year. The next step will be to establish a theological commission to deal with all these responses, and work on all the material to form a first draft of an official Roman Catholic response, before going through a process of refinement. After decision in the PCPCU, the text will be sent to the Congregations for the Doctrine of the Faith for endorsement. Once endorsed, it will be presented to the Faith and Order Commission as the official response of the Roman Catholic Church. In addition we have received responses we have not asked for, but that are welcome, from different individuals, groups and faculties, and we have been collecting articles and other documents related to the text. The engagement with the document is very active, because we cannot achieve a full communion of the church without having a common vision of the church, its mission and its unity.

Bishop Dr Isaac Mar Philoxenos (Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar) was also invited to comment on "The Church" document. He said that in his church there has been a study of the document in the forum of bishops, clergy and the office for ecumenical affairs. A point has been made to study this document in the clergy conferences. We are happy to highlight a few observations of appreciation and affirmation of the document, especially that the diversity is not accidental, but is a legitimate part of creating the document. We live in a world of diversity. Accepting diversity and trying to understand the differences and living together is important. God has designed salvation in Christ, and this is fleshed out in various peoples. The historical reality of the church, as well as the mystery of the church and the understanding of the local church as catholic in its fullness, that each local church has the potential to grow into full church, recognizing it as the one, holy and catholic church, is fundamental. We welcome the common ecclesiology developed in the document, on the basis of communion in the Trinitarian understanding of God, mutually in-dwelling and acting together. The church recognizes the multiple realities we live in and experience. We are happy to share the experience of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar, that

our churches together now are constituting a communion of churches within India. We are also in communion with the Anglican Church worldwide, and have dialogues with the Roman Catholic Church and other churches in India. This gives us hope for the possibility of growing into full communion. The church lives in a multi-religious and cultural context in India. We need to co-exist in a responsible manner. The Mar Thoma Church is often considered a bridge between Orthodox and Protestants. The annual meeting in Kerala is an occasion for the ecumenical journey of the church, where pilgrims are all moving together. We are happy that the text challenges us, so that this relationship becomes a vital part of the church.

Rev. Dr Susan Durber (United Reformed Church), moderator of the Faith and Order Commission, gave a response to the introductions. At any meeting of the Faith and Order Commission, the meeting begins by sharing what is happening among the churches. This place of testimony is always the starting point of our work. We hear about the reality, about hurts and celebrations. We do our theology in the midst of life in all its raw pain and beauty. I have heard stories that can turn stony hearts into flesh. Around the table there are people who know what it means to be imprisoned. People who are receiving refugees with what little they have. There are those who bravely preach the gospel in cynical and secularised contexts. The commission is in a real sense made up of practical theologians, with feet as well as heads. "The Church" was discussed and drafted upon until we had a text after 20 years or more. It came from those already on a pilgrimage of justice and peace. One could ask why bother about thinking ecclesiology when there is so much to be done. What has unity to do with making the world a better place? We have come to realise that this is false distinction. It cannot be that some *think* about the church and others *do* what the church is supposed to do. Our text says different: there is God who has a mission to heal the world's brokenness. To be part of the mission of God we need to be healed ourselves, to mend brokenness and overcome our divisions. That is what this document says and this is why ecclesiology matters. The church needs to be renewed and to receive God's gift of communion so that we can be a witness of this gift. What is it for, but to serve God's mission for the world, to participate in God´s work of healing this world. If we are to offer such a gift we have first to receive it ourselves. Some might say that we cannot wait for the slowness of theologians. But we are not waiting. We see the world as it is, reflecting, while we are at the same time engaged in serving the world. We will not find unity by ignoring issues. We need to be willing to struggle with the differences. The pilgrimage works best when we talk to each other, walk together, listening and finally reaching out to hold hands in communion. In his report, the general secretary talked about hope. We discover a source of hope; the church is not a human reality, it is Gods´ reality. We discover what God is doing for the world. There are people of good will all over the world seeking to bring justice and peace. We can walk with them, but we also have a particular gift to bring as the church of Jesus Christ. We have roots, traditions, wisdom, the Gospel and each other to remind us of the bits we sometimes forget. We have the power of God to draw us into unity, so that the world may see. We have a different horizon, a horizon we only find in the people of God. This is why ecclesiology matters. We ask you to receive this as part of our pilgrimage of justice and peace.

The moderator summarized the session and pleaded to the churches to engage with the document in the same way as was done with the Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry document. She then gave the word to the general secretary, who thanked all for the reflections before making announcements.

7.3. Middle East

On Saturday, 25 June, Archbishop Emeritus Dr Anders Wejryd, Church of Sweden, WCC President for Europe, opened a hearing session. He said that we are all interdependent, and we need to know more about each other. He then introduced H.E. Dr Tarek Mitri, former WCC staff and former Lebanese minister and UN special representative.

H.E. Dr Tarek Mitri began describing the hope that energized people some years ago, while today's disillusionment justifies attempts to reverse transitions. Disillusionment, uncertainty and fear indicate that we cannot ignore the resurgence of sub-national identities and the centrifugal forces at work in many Arab countries. Weakened states accentuate communalism and encourage the surfacing of narratives of victimhood, often emotional and aggressive. Many retreat into minority centred communities. Friends and foes continue to construct their actions and narratives on the basis of what they think is US politics. Russia could not have launched its war on Syrian soil, if it was not convinced that the Syrians had moral support from America. In Europe, hesitant attempts at pursuing democratization, sanctioning human right abuse, resort to diplomacy and articulate a refugee policy that is being overshadowed by the idea of protection against ISIS and the spill over of a massive refugee movement. The two states solution in Israel and Palestine is becoming more elusive; there has been no peace process worthy of the name. Tunisia is often regarded as a relative success in the post-uprising region. Egypt is still prey to polarization. In Syria, a peaceful uprising was militarized by necessity as the Yazidis were attacked. Libya has not re-emerged from its multiple wars. The Libyan regime's survival is largely attributed to Iranian and Russian support, which reveals an asymmetry that results in a conflict beyond national borders. The shortfalls of transition could not be overstated – deficit of competence and a weakness of political forces contribute to the explanation of the volatility of building the state. Progress could not be achieved by adopting a universal model of transition. Political change must be suited for the realities of today, not the hope of an earlier era. Thereby one refrains from reaching out to minorities, ethnic, religious or political. The inability to include also contributes to radicalisation.

Christians possess tools and motivation to discern and acknowledge the resistance of many Muslim compatriots to the hegemonic tendency of radical Islam. Christians have spiritual resources to resist the alarmism of fear. They are not shying away from the threats, but upholding values they have always had. The notion of Christian presence was the antidote to aggressive communalism and withdrawal from public life. The role of Church institutions was defined by the gospel, rooted in the imperative of witness and service.

The moderator opened the floor for comments.

In response to a question, Dr Mitri clarified saying that he in his presentation was alluding to the Yazidis. As for the rest of the many people suffering hardships, he would use the expression war crimes or crimes against humanity. He said that he is one of those who hope that, whatever political solution would be found in Syria, there will not be impunity for war crimes or crimes against humanity. There are Christians who have opted for a civic relationship that binds them to Muslims and therefore are active in civil society work, together with Muslim co-citizens. Dr Mitri himself comes from Lebanon where civil society emerged as a force to reckon with. Much of the bonds transcend the minority/majority divide. In the presentation he argued that this is not just a numerical notion, but has to do with how you define yourself in relation to your neighbour. In the Arab world, if you are able to reconcile majority and minority rights, you stand better for the future, which in his view is not hopeless.

Fr. Iakovos Andriopoulos (Church of Greece) said that the Middle East is not the same region we looked at five to six years ago. We were all excited by the democratization, but we are aware that systems must be adopted and contextualized. He thanked Dr Mitri for his conclusion. It is true that Christians sometimes consider themselves minorities, or are considered minorities. But, if we talk about minorities, Christians still give so much to the Middle Eastern society. It is important to remind people that Christians come from the Middle East, our roots are there, and we are part of the society. We have to talk about equal rights.

Rev. Prof. Dr Fernando Enns asked about what political systems is the goal. Is democracy just a dream of the Western world? Is democracy is the way? How do you see the critique that this is just a Western idea? Dr Mitri replied that there is no universal model for democratic transition, cloning worlds are

impossible, but the possibility for democracy is still there. Rather than a dream, he would talk about a principle. In every country democratic development is still an energizing idea. In China, Chu En-Lie gave his opinion on the French revolution, that it was premature to make a final judgement. In the same way, it is pre-mature to make a judgement about democracy in the Middle East.

Ms Kirsten Auken (Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark) said that Danmission, an organization that works to reduce poverty and encourage church development and dialogue in Africa, Asia and the Middle East, is working actively with Christian groups in the area. One can see people spilling over into Europe and the tensions are rising between different groups. How can we promote a sense of citizenship for these groups, also in the receiving countries? Dr Mitri replied that Europe has been doing its best to deal with symptoms, combating radicalization, dealing with violence, whether legal or illegal, when it comes to refugees in those countries. The real issue, however, is dealing with the root causes of all this and that is where we see a striking absence of Europe. When it comes to Syria, dealing with it means finding what can be a real, serious, acceptable, moral solution for Syria. The rule of law one cannot do harm. Churches have a pastoral role in dealing with refugees. But from the viewpoint of the state, one needs to deal with the law.

Dr Audeh B. Quawas (Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in Jerusalem) commented about the issue of democracy and the dream of Europe. It is important to remember that we do not want democracy to arrive by tanks. We want it to come from inside.

Dr Wejryd then invited a panel to the stage: Ms Hind Kabawat from Syria, Dr Muna Mushahwar from Palestine and Mr Hany Fawzy from Egypt.

Ms Hind Kabawat, Director of Interfaith Peacebuilding for the Center for World Religions Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution from Syria, gave an update on the situation in the country, which remains dire and is worsening. 500’000 persons have died, 14 million are in need of humanitarian aid, five million are refugees and six million are internally displaced. The ceasefire is no longer respected. Sadly we have seen thousands of innocent civilians killed in spite of the attempted cessation of hostility. One million people live under medieval sieges, and there is need for a comprehensive approach to bring about a political transition in Syria. Despite this, there are signs of hope.

There are excellent peace building initiatives on the ground, among them Christian and non-Christian initiatives inside and outside Syria. Among these are many churches opening their doors to be hospitable, working on education and peace initiatives. We run schools funded by Christians, Jews and Muslims. The church has an important role to play, in particular for Syrian Christians. All institutions are obliged to adapt to the regime in order to benefit from the system, but when it comes to clarity, a certain number of institutions also support the system. In fact, there are two sides, hardening the talks about the future, but there are also those who do great work on the ground. However, they are a silent majority working discretely. Then there are all those who have left the country, who were pushed to leave because of activism or they refused to serve in the army and fled the war. The church is not requested to take sides, but even in this sensitive situation the church should find ways to serve the true power. This is not currently the case in Syria, nor in the whole region. One must take into consideration the suffering of all the people. We cannot speak against extremism without also acknowledging the suffering of those fighting a bloody regime. We must condemn both the terrorist actions and the bloody regime, while trying to ease human suffering. Ethical and normative imperatives should be addressed in order to remain faithful to the Gospel, and in order to have a common future for Syria based on shared values. Three urgent steps need to be taken, 1) to call for the revival of the ceasefire, 2) to call for an end to the medieval and unlawful use of starvation, and 3) to call for the release of all political prisoners. We need to stand firm with all the oppressed people in the region. They demand and deserve to live a better life, and we need your voice to protect them.

Dr Muna Mushahwar (Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem), from Palestine, co-moderator of Palestine Israel Ecumenical Forum (PIEF), compared the siege in Gaza to Syria, saying they are parts of the same oppressive systems. In the past few days she had been observing the beauty and serenity of the surroundings of the central committee meeting and thought: this must be what freedom is like. She spoke about all Palestinian children in refugee camps, who want to survive the dehumanization, but are too often put out before they can bloom. The situation on the ground for the last two years is that the spiral of violence is re-emerging; a spiral where Israel no longer cares about international opinion, and Palestinians fail to build an economy under occupation. A fourteen year old Palestinian was kidnapped, tortured and burnt alive, causing a spontaneous uprising of Palestinian youth, with unguided rockets into Jerusalem, causing more gun power and deathly shooting as a consequence. In Gaza, however, Israel has launched a full war. In 50 days of war, 2139 Palestinians were killed, 11,000 wounded, of which almost 500 children were killed and 3,000 children wounded. I cannot describe what I saw in their eyes as I treated them, traumatized and probably never to recover. About 500,000 people were displaced, nothing and no one was spared. There are heaps of rubble, and the peace process is buried once and for all. The worst of these attacks was in a small house. A baby died, the mother died a week later, then the father. The only survival was a young boy still being treated. Never mind justice and accountability and law, to be "protecting sources" was more important. In this situation there is no hope for political solutions, the separation wall is closing tighter, along with the ever-expanding illegal settlements, and we find ourselves in a new situation: if no one was going to protect what was left, Palestinian boys will take the case in their own hands, they have lost faith in leadership. Sadly, they see no other solution than violence. Netanyahu still refuses the 1967 border.

Dr Mushawar proceeded to show a map of the occupation of Palestine. The current government is the most extreme right wing government in the history of modern day Israel, and this is by Israeli accounts. What is left for Palestine is scattered islands in the middle of a sea of occupied land. A two-state solution is no longer possible on the ground or even theoretically. No matter what, we still need to build and support that steadfastness of people, providing services, schools, education and health. There are groups coming to visit sites, as if they were on safari. Church groups must be responsible. If you do not do anything beforehand, prepare, and at least meet people and talk to them. Soon there will not even be the stones to speak. Any use of the Bible that provides cover up for the occupation is far from Christian teaching. We have to be careful and pay attention when we hear and see that. When one church is under attack for being in solidarity, you must show support to your brothers and sisters, even if you are unable to take the step of speaking up against the system. Over 7 million Palestinians around the world are waiting to come home.

Mr Hany Fawzy (Coptic Orthodox Church), a blogger from Egypt, introduced the phenomenon of "Millennials – a New pilgrimage mode". He started by saying that we live in a time of endings and beginnings. What is ending and dying is an old economic model. What we are witnessing in our age is the death of one civilisation and the birth of another. We experience and live through that death and rebirth every single day. An example is Tahrir Square in Cairo, which has been turned into a symbol by young people all over the world, resulting in "*/Tahrir square/United for #GlobalChange"*. On 15 October 2011, a global protest was planned, and it started with young people in 950 cities in 82 countries defending the same values: freedom, dignity and justice. Inspired by the Arab spring, "United for #GlobalChange" worked under the title "United for Global Democracy". The bad news is that the frustrations among young people are still all there. Millennials represent the next great generation. The global movement "Ordinary Heroes" consist of people born between 1982 and 2004. These millenials can be described as digital citizens. They are always connected, almost like a body part; Google is part of their memories and part of them. They are alone, but yet together, in an intensive, multi-dimensional communication going on all the time. Alone and together they form networks from Iceland to Tunisia. They are everywhere, defending universal values, talking the same language, struggling against the same

oppression and inequalities. This is the most educated generation, and they show different social trends. They are less likely to marry, there is a reduction in birth-rate, and they are the largest work-force in Egypt, changing workplace modes and relations. They have different consumption habits, no private cars, eat healthier foods, consume with a reciprocity principle, and they have a different approach to religion. There are three million atheists in Egypt. People tend to become less religious as they grow older. 46,9 %, or about 40 million people, are millenials. With their new mind-set the changes are big in all aspects of life, politically, economically and socially. They are not able to get a parliamentary majority, but they can stop parliamentary decisions. One important insight of the millenials is that power is easier to get, but harder to use and easier to lose. A new pathway of social justice, freedom and dignity is being built, paved by these amazing young people.

Dr Wejryd gave thanks for the inputs.

7.4. Religion and Violence

On Sunday, 26 June, the hearing session was moderated by the Rt. Rev. Mark MacDonald (Anglican Church of Canada), WCC President for North America region. He started by introducing the plenary theme, which would include both violence by and violence against religious groups. If we want to work for peace, we need to acknowledge that religion is a contributor to violence. We should not in a secularist manner focus only on economy, culture and psychology. There are several kinds of religious fundamentalisms.

The moderator introduced the panel: H.E. Ambassador Knut Vollebæk, Ms Berit Hagen Agøy, Rabbi Dr David Fox Sandmel, Dr Mohamed Elsanousi and Rev. Dr Wushishy I. Yousef.

Mr Knut Vollebæk (Church of Norway), member of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA) and former foreign minister of Norway, was asked to speak on religious minorities. He started by expressing gratitude for being invited. He emphasized that a forum like this was necessary for soul-searching. There is, for instance, increasing tension in the region of Africa. How can we help those who are in the midst of tension today? In Europe, there are forces that appeal to majority churches to help form groups shaping a “national identity” and working against minorities. Then it becomes easy to fall into the trap of nationalist politicians. We seem to have forgotten World War II. Have we also forgotten the Balkan war? How can we help each other in this situation? We must defend the principle that those who believe differently, or do not believe at all, have the same human rights as myself. We should defend people’s right to defend their convictions. He also underlined that in the OSCE High Commission on National Minorities he saw first-hand how discrimination leads to conflict. Could we talk about how we can reconcile a theology where church and territory belong together, with the need to uphold every individual’s inalienable right to freedom of belief and to practice this belief together with others? How can churches help each other in tackling these challenges? Discrimination, exclusion and violence in the name of religion can never be the will of God.

Ms Berit Hagen Agøy (Church of Norway), general secretary of the Council on Ecumenical and International Relations, was asked to speak on religious violence and women. She opened by saying that in a typical interfaith gathering she had participated in, 80% of the speakers were men. They underlined that every human being has the same dignity. But to differentiate between us and them can, in worst cases, lead to exclusion of particular groups from our communities. Many of us have had experiences of being excluded. When I pointed this out, one of the participants said: “Yes, it is important to speak about women’s conditions, but let’s stick to the theme of the conference.” The logic was that first we need to establish peace, and then we can deal with women’s issues. But what if we turn it upside down? Gender violence is probably among the most normal forms of violence. In Norway one out of four have been threatened, one out of ten have been violently assaulted. Even if violence against women is common, it should not be accepted as normal life, but be regarded as extreme actions.

Twenty-five years ago a contact group between Church of Norway and the Islamic Council in Norway was established. A joint statement was issued on violence in the family and in close relationships that said: "As Christians and Muslims we believe that men and women are created equal and none have the right to exercise violence. We strongly condemn any misuse of the teachings…". Later, we started to work on a new statement, but then the terror attack in Norway happened on 22 July 2011. Our work became more relevant than expected. In all major religions we find tendencies that can lead to extreme actions. What are the signs that can warn us?

Extremists reduce human dignity of groups they oppose, and reject the idea that human rights apply to these groups. Can we learn anything from the exclusion of women that can help us in understanding the issue? Extremists are convinced that there are groups of people that it is impossible to coexist with, and which they must therefore oppose or remove, either from society as a whole or from certain places and areas. I become uncertain and humiliated when my guest will not shake my hand or when my host places me at another table. I am discouraged when this is done to women to make us invisible. The danger is that we get used to it in such a way that we ourselves contribute to it. We can develop a minority complex. To put it bluntly: if male religious leaders can easily overlook our presence, how can they then contribute to solving problems caused by exclusion? We need to examine our traditions and face the injustices, because injustice can lead to violence.

Extremists believe that they are alone in interpreting their own religion correctly, so that they cannot cooperate with others who think differently, even though these belong to the same religious tradition. Extremists accuse those who think differently of having certain political, ethical or religious opinions, without allowing them to define for themselves who they are or what they believe. Extremists use gender-based hierarchies and power structures in which women are denied human rights and human dignity on the same level as men. Extremists are willing to use terror, violence or other forms of compulsion in order to enforce the consequences of their religious views on others.

Rabbi Dr David Fox Sandmel, director of Interfaith Affairs, Anti-Defamation League, started out by saying that because he is a Jew he cannot think of religions and violence without also thinking of anti-Semitism. The WCC has spoken out against some of the attacks against Jews in recent years but said the WCC could do better. Jewish institutions have had to have police protection. Jews are leaving Europe. The denial of the Holocaust continues. Despite Jesus being an observant Jew, some Christians continue to teach that Judaism is particularistic, legalistic and devoid of spiritual value. There is an anti-Semitic document still circulating by some Christians around the world, and this fosters an atmosphere in which Jews are demonized and seen as legitimate targets for hatred and violence. WCC has often spoken about this, and it is deeply significant that WCC continues to speak of this. Yet, WCC documents rarely dive into the views of the Jews, including the question of land, which is so important to Jewish identity.

The positive relations with WCC show that we have come a long way, but that work still needs to be done is not surprising. There is opportunity for learning and for reflection. In Busan I was warmly welcomed. Our meetings were respectful and deep, and at times addressed problems I am raising now. However, classic Christian anti-Judaism is still found in WCC and can become a weapon of anti-Jewish-Christian dialogue. One example is the Kairos Palestine letter. It is a genuine cry for justice, but it is flawed with mixed historical distortions. And worse, theological anti-Semitism can be found in the document. It also uses binary terms, such as Israel has more power, therefore Israel is responsible.

I have experienced this unbalanced hostility as an international in a Beit Jala visit of the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace reference group. But to report on it without an honest assessment of the broader context is irresponsible and unfair.

Dr Mohamed Elsanousi from the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers, spoke about the *Marrakesh Declaration: A Significance Response to Religiously Motivated Violence.* He started out by saying that extremists use scripture to justify violent acts. The Islamic position of preservation of life is

very clear; if you kill one life it is as if you kill the whole of humanity. If you save one life, you save the whole of humanity. He said that Muslim culture is going through a very hard time, but he focused his remarks on the recent positive development: the Marrakesh declaration. Many people in Muslim communities are facing difficulties and this should be acknowledged. After World War II, a lot of difficulties came as a result of what religious minorities were going through, many experienced restriction on religious freedom. As a result, some would say, "we are going to see a Middle East without Christians". Some minority communities in the Middle East and North Africa and other areas where terrorist groups are active have suffered from forced displacement, trafficking, etc.

In Marrakesh in January 2016, a meeting was hosted by the king of Morocco, with the aim of affirming the right of minorities in Muslim majority contexts. This resulted in the Marrakesh declaration, a self-described call to action grounded in reference to the historic Charter of Medina. Muslim scholars, politicians, activists and interfaith clergy gathered over two days to address the rights of minorities. The Marrakech declaration has the potential for significant impact in addressing a pressing human rights issue. Acknowledgement of the problem and the need for collective and acute action is a step forward in itself.

The declaration has been widely recognized by Muslim Majority Communities, inter-religious leadership in the Middle East and North Africa region and beyond, Western governments and inter-governmental organisations. The declaration will be implanted through sharing the declaration with Ulema (Islamic scholars) across the Muslim world, inter-religious engagement, engagement with civil society, legislative and policy change and through education.

The moderator thanked the panellists for their contributions and opened the floor for comments.

H.G. Bishop Youanes (Coptic Orthodox Church) said that in Christian-Muslim dialogue one finds that there are moderate Muslims and extremist Muslims. In Egypt there are mostly moderate Muslims, but there are some fanatics. There is collaboration against the fanatic Muslims. The fanatics misuse the Medina verses of the Quran to do violence against others, even against fellow Muslims.

H.E. Metropolitan Serafim Kykotis (Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa) said that we need to talk about "healthy" religion. A problem regarding violence is when God's justice is upset. What does it mean? It means violation of human rights. We need a common voice against violence. We do speak as regional church bodies in Europe and North America, but countries in these regions produce guns used in countries where there are conflicts, like in the Middle East, where arms are not produced. What is the voice of our churches? What is the voice of the WCC to stop the conflict in Syria? Six million people are refugees, more than 300,000 have died, and the majority are not using guns. Who is behind the extremists?

Bishop Dr Daniel Jensen Seyenkulo (Lutheran Church in Liberia) asked a question to Dr Mohamed about what appears in the Quran that may be applied to then and not now. Hearing this gives a sense of hope. However I am reading a book, "The house that is left behind", about a man who has converted from Islam to Christianity. We should be suspicious when we hear of the good intentions of Muslims, because their intention is to win and convert us to Islam by whatever means possible. I am torn between what Dr Mohamed has said and what the book is telling me. My second concern is to Rabbi Sandmel, about what is said by WCC in relation to the Pharisees. My concern is that when you say WCC makes this accusation that Jesus acted against the Pharisees, than we speak about Israel and Jews. If a group of people in Judaism are spoken to, why do you say it concerns all Jews?

Rev. Silishebo Silishebo (United Church of Zambia) expressed his deep appreciation of the presentations. For the first time in his life he heard someone speaking from the heart on something that is supposed to come from the head, and head only. We connect the heart and the mind in our work to transform the world. At times I feel torn. It is the first time I experience it from the heart of a Jew with whom I share

the scriptures, that sometimes my language hurts and damages. It may be true that in the WCC we may tend to hide a lot in the polished language of well-written documents. Yet, the practice in our churches is different. How do we connect conferences and documents to actual life in the parish? We share the Abrahamic scriptures. How can we ensure the heart to heart connection to each other?

H.E. Metropolitan Eustathius Matta Roham (Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and all the East) said that Christians, Jews and Muslims need to speak to each other. Where is the cause of the problem of violence happening in the world? Is it within religious texts, or is it within society, inheritance? We need to revise our curricula, where a lot of hatred against each other can be found. Why have not the school books been revised? Once there is a reformed mind, with a clear peace, there will be peace – peace with each other.

Ms Torill Edøy (Church of Norway, EDAN) raised the issue of gender violence. There is a group of people that seldom are mentioned when speaking about this theme. It is a fact that people with disabilities more often experience violence and abuse. It is taken for granted that these people cannot contribute. I am ashamed that Norway is only accepting 16 refugees with disabilities this year. Jesus said, that what you do to the least of my brothers you do on to me.

Rev. Dr Binsar Jonathan (Huria Kristen Batak Protestan) said that he agreed with Ms Agøy, and that in the future more women panellists should be present. He was proud of the first woman president in the national council of churches (PGI) in Indonesia, Rev. Dr Henriette Hutabarat-Lebang. However, probably this is also a bit of a generational question. In my generation we accept gender equality as a given fact. I think inequality will change in the future. He also thanked Rabbi Sandmel for his honest and sincere speech. In Indonesia we also have dialogue with our Jewish brothers and sisters, but we have never invited people from Israel. We should avoid being binary, this is food for thought. We have tried to invite hardliners, but it is difficult.

Mr Thomas Kang (Evangelical Church of Lutheran Confession in Brazil) thanked Ms Agøy for her contribution. He saw a connection with what happened in Brazil when 33 men gang raped a woman. Many people, most of them being religious, said the problem was the young woman´s behaviour. To Rabbi Sandmel, on the issue of Palestine, how can we address injustice and not be shy, and at the same time find a language that does not create identity problems? We need to find the right language, but at the same time be strong on what we think is unjust.

Mr Areej Rashid (World Association for Christian Communication, Canada) agreed that the gender perspective is important because women are disproportionally victims of violence. Extremists come in and use their cause against women. We see it happen in ISIS, and in many other groups. We also see the use of female suicide bombers. Religion and violence are becoming crossroads, because it is illegitimate violence. What is the role of media in perpetuating these stereotypes?

Bishop Samuel R. Azariah (Church of Pakistan) said that a week before he came from Pakistan, there was a statement on how should we treat women issued by a council primarily established to vet decisions of the parliament and see that they are in conjunction with the principles of the Quran and the Sunna. It says that if we have to discipline a woman, we can abuse a woman. Do not break her bones or teeth, but to physically abuse a woman is allowed. How can we address this in the context of Pakistan? I respect the contributions by moderate Muslims, because of them we have had confidence as a minority in our context. Two concerns reamin: how do we face the state of denial of the realities that are taking place in the name of religion all over the world and, how do we dialogue with the extremist Muslims?

Rev. Prof. Dr Jerry Pillay said that is natural to think that others are violent, and violence is against us. It is important that we do not rush into defence, but that we think about it in a larger picture, and search our hearts and minds and say that we are guilty too. We proclaim faith, peace, harmony and justice, when we are contributing to destroying the good world God has given us. We also need to ask how we

pool our resources together, our own experiences, in order to face those who are using extremist methods. If we don't reach out, we are not going to heal. The time has come to act, in order to stop what is going on in this world in the name of religion.

Rev. Dr Hyunju Bae (Presbyterian Church in Korea) as a scholar of New Testament at the Busan Presbyterian University, raised a question to Rabbi Sandmel. She teaches the danger of Christian hermeneutics perpetuating anti-Semitism and, at the same time, she uses the Kairos Palestine document. Is there a real conversation between Jewish leaders and the authors of Kairos Palestine? We really need guidance in this question.

The panel was invited to respond.

Rabbi Dr David Sandmel explained that he uses the Pharisees as one particular example, especially since the WCC has had a good statement on the way the Pharisees are being used. But there is a vast literature on the ways Judaism is preached in Christian traditions. In terms of how to connect it to the sharing of land, this is a huge problem, and one of the most important things that can be done is to focus on the people in the region who are working together to solve problems. He said that he often finds Christians who are rightly concerned about Palestine spending time pointing fingers, not on bringing people together. It is important to engage Israeli and Palestinian NGOs that are working on dialogue. Regarding the Kairos Palestine document, the foundation of the document is legitimate, but he said he was criticising aspects of it, and would be willing to share an annotated copy with his own notes.

Dr Mohamed Elsanousi explained about the implementation of the Marrakech declaration that the council and the WCC are active members of the network. How to implement the declaration as a network of 52 organisations was discussed. Muslim scholars, can be characterized as moderate, but they are authorities as well. Dialogue between those who produce the document, and those who were not even present is a challenge. For your own pilgrimage of justice and peace, how can we build that relationship? We have to build trust and confidence. I come from a village in Sudan without a single Christian. I came to the US and was able to build trust and confidence. Today US Muslim communities have good relationships with Christian communities. When the senate committee asked twenty-five organisations to submit records to the senate, a letter from the NCCCUSA was sent. A lot of history is behind that letter. When we started the dialogue, it was behind doors, on interreligious and social justice. Do we need to talk to the more conservative groups? Yes we do. But some of them are zones of comfort, and these are challenges. In Pakistan, yes, they are in denial. I interacted with the minister from Pakistan in Marrakech who said that there is no problem for Christians in Pakistan. We need the Muslim communities to own Marrakesh first, than we can have interreligious dialogue and discussion on it. The Quran is a sacred book, we believe in it, but we also believe that at the same time it is not obligated, but valid. We have to make sure in which circumstances some of the verses were revealed, which verses were valid then, which are valid today. We need to have the interpretation and discussion. The discussion is already happening, but how to engage the different groups in the discussion is the challenge. The role of media is important. When we have interaction with the media, governments will listen to us. When Terry Jones burnt the Quran, people were killed and people said that is what the Christians are doing, that is what the US are doing. These are not Muslim issues, these are US issues that should be tackled by America. We need to find a mechanism to strengthen our trust and community to work together as a nation.

Ms Berit Hagen Agøy said that someone has said that we tend to focus on the violence others do to us rather than what we do to others. In some situations we see a willingness to kill another human being. What is it that makes that crossing of the border possible? We need to offer safe spaces where people can share their stories. We all have experiences of situations where we tend to violate each other. We

need to ask the question: Why am I willing, in particular situations, to use violence to my fellow human being?

Rev. Dr Wushishi I.Yusuf (Nigerian Baptist Convention), general secretary of the Christian Council of Nigeria, was then invited to share what the work being done in Nigeria. He began with a description of the situation in Nigeria. In Nigeria, like in other countries, conflicts divide neighbourhoods and communities. The threat of war hangs over us like a shadow. Some politicians and some fundamentalists use religion as a force to divide. Religion has been employed as a force of violence instead of a force for unity and peace. Nigeria has the largest Muslim population in sub-Saharan Africa, and share borders with Muslim majority countries. Nigerian diversity reflects the rich cultural heritage of the people. Christianity, Islam and traditional African religions are professed. There are also differences between parts of the country. As Christians it is our obligation and responsibility to respect our religious differences while forcing peaceful bonds, this is about the relationship between human beings.

Dr Yusuf went on to present the WCC inter-religious initiative against religious violence in Nigeria. The objectives of the WCC/RABIIT initiative is to demonstrate an international model of Muslims and Christians working together in an inter-religious engagement aimed at fostering peace and harmony between people of different religions. Findings show that a number of causes and key factors behind the inter-religious tensions and crisis in Nigeria include religious, political, economic, social and legal indifferences. These are also impossible to separate from each other. The delegation put together in collaboration with the WCC recommended the establishment of a monitoring centre with the following functions: to provide a perceived neutral space where incidents of violence could be recorded and acknowledged; to facilitate the sharing of stories, allowing the voices of those who feel voiceless to be heard and recorded; to assist the collecting of accurate data about incidents of violence in Nigeria. The centre also aims at furthering inter faith actions.

After the presentation, the central committee members were asked to write down three short statements on religion and violence to be collected at the end of the plenary.

The moderator thanked the audience for their patience and handed over to closing prayer.

7.4.1. Remarks by the general secretary on the plenary

On 27 June, H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima moderated the hearing session. He invited the general secretary to comment on an intervention made during the plenary on religion and violence.

The general secretary said that to his great surprise Rabbi Sandmel, who has been involved in a fruitful and constructive dialogue, surprisingly used this particular opportunity to critique the WCC, which has so often and with so many member churches been speaking against anti-Jewish speeches or actions. He said that he was disappointed that he used the opportunity for what many received as “propaganda style”, rather than more input for reflection. We are not against critical reflections, but the manner was not appropriate. We have to learn from this experience. We have to ask ourselves how we continue the dialogue with our Jewish partners, and how we continue the dialogue on issues of justice and peace.

Dr Audeh B. Quawas (Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem) thanked the general secretary for the introduction, but said it is a palliative treatment, not a radical treatment. He said that he was speaking as an Orthodox and Christian. In our own house, our faith is being challenged. This is not the first trial somebody is doing this. I am a Semitic person, we are Semites as well, not only the Jewish people. We need to treat this radically. We need to take concrete action in-house, against those who are the most rightist Jewish organisations. Thank you for addressing the issue, but it will continue to be a trauma for Palestinians.

Rev. Peter Colwell (Churches Together in Britain and Ireland) said that the session on religion and violence was quite moving, and he thanked the speakers and the members for sharing. He gave thanks

for taking the time to do that. He also expressed that he would give enormous credit to the fact that the central committee not only had an intra-Christian session, but took the risk of hearing the perspectives of a Muslim and a Jew. Rabbi Sandmel's sharing was difficult to hear, but it is important to have open discussions.

H.E. Metropolitan Eustathius Matta Roham (Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch and All the East) said that bringing the speakers in was a good idea. We might differ in many ways, but it is good to hear their views. We have to reflect on the different views. We might not be happy at all, because Islam, Judaism and Christianity have different views, but we have to hear each other.

H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Bishoy of Damietta (Coptic Orthodox Church) congratulated the WCC with a clear statement for the protection of human rights. They have blocked us from speaking to people, but WCC has to speak freely. We want to see a Palestinian state like the state of Israel.

7.5. Child Rights

On Monday, 27 June, in a hearing session, Rev. Martina Viktorie Kopecká (Czechoslovak Hussite Church) welcomed and introduced the panel participants, Mr Masimba Kuchera, Ms Caterina Tino, Ms Sabine Rakotomalala. Ms Kopecka reminded the group that children are among the most vulnerable victims of injustice, poverty and abuse. Children and young people are full of ideas and have views and concerns that can help shape the church. At the WCC 10th assembly, opportunities for joint efforts to respond to challenges of children were discussed.

Mr Masimba Kuchera (United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe), member of the CCIA, and moderator of the core group for the development of child friendly churches, opened by saying that, for several months, notes had been taken for this important presentation. On the day of travel, he drove 100 kilometres to another place, discovering that the notes were lost. The Lord still knows what I am supposed to say. I will share with you in short detail how we are going to develop the principle and tools of child friendly churches. On the road from Busan to Trondheim we have seen that in a lot of places in the world, children are not found in the churches any more. Have you wondered where they are? My guess is as good as yours, but we might suppose it is in a worse place than in church. The journey to develop the tools we use was also an inspiring journey; a journey the working group could not let go. We discovered that the work might not be complete if we do not invite our partners. A seminar in November 2015 brought some clear recommendations with theological reflections. A recommendation is that young as I feel, I am not a child, and we need the voice of children. Then we decided to expand our working group. We now have a bigger advisory group, and a skill set to develop these principles and tools.

Ms Caterina Tino (UNICEF, Civil Society Partnerships) shared a personal reflection on her experience in an episcopal church. The pastor shared the story of Elijah and the widow. The sermon was on poverty and about justice and peace. It was made clear that churches can play a role in bringing about justice for children. We need to ground the principles for our work in a strong background. Therefore a theological working group was formed with the task of drafting a basis for putting children at the centre of the WCC's pilgrimage on justice and peace. A meeting of the group resulted in a letter accompanying the principles. The letter said that we should celebrate the gifts of children, visit the wounds of children, and encourage churches to transform injustices. Consultations with 144 children between three and eighteen years of age were organized in seven countries. Some of their recommendations were simple. These are some of the things they shared: the church is a place where you are taught to stop lying, beating younger ones and change your behaviour. The church brings hope and understanding, creates bridges between countries.

Ms Sabine Rakotomalala (UNICEF, Global Partnership to end Violence against Children Protection) explained that it is necessary to work with key people for developing the principles. One out of two children had been victims of some kind of physical, sexual or psychological abuse. Every day millions of

children are victims of violence in their homes, their schools or other places. Like with smoking, cancer and other threats, we used to think that it is just the way it is. But experts remind us that there are solutions. She then proceeded to present seven solutions. If you manage to implement the seven interventions in your country, you actually see a lowering of violence against children in your country. The global partnership to end violence was created eight months ago. The project brings together governments, government related organisations, civil society, and NGOs. Creating political will to reduce violence against children is important. We need to accelerate action; there is need for coherent plans of action. We also need to strengthen collaboration. We want countries and agencies to learn from each other, by organizing consultations. Churches are important because the questions are so complex, e.g. in Central Africa. There is a conflict between Muslims and Catholics, which is not really about Islam and Christianity. Therefore, interfaith dialogue is very important. She then proceeded to show a short film on violence against children. Violence is a behaviour we can change.

The moderator said that key people are children themselves. A testimonial video from a consultation with children about the principles was shown. The moderator then introduced two young participants, Matilda Stålberg and Jonathan Hultberg, from the Church of Sweden.

Jonathan shared that his path to church started with confirmation, and he did not want it to end, because it was fun. Church feels like a second home because no one judges you. So when the priest asked him to become a young leader he immediately said yes.

Matilda said that her interest was sparked when she was introduced to Taizé. The sense of community and the simplicity made her change her mind. The role as a young leader has also been engaging.

Both participated in a pilgrimage journey to Santiago de Compostela. This trip and Taizé have influenced them both, and opened up perspectives on simplicity. Now they are working with refugees, engaging local people through simple activities like football and hiking. Through this they have earned a greater understanding, which is good because racism and xenophobia exist in Swedish society. Church is a place they know they can return to and feel belonging and faith has come successively.

The moderator thanked Matilda and Jonathan for sharing their experiences with the central committee. Rev. Dr Hutabarat-Lebang gave greetings from the Communion of Churches in Indonesia (PGI). She presented PGI's response to the escalating violence in society, by showing a short film. She proceeded by introducing how the PGI works with the churches to help them become child friendly churches. A policy is developed, with an analysis of the social situation of children, a theological reflection, and an ecumenical call to churches to become child friendly. The policy proposed seven concrete guidelines for the churches to take in order to become child friendly. "When the principles will be enforced, families will know they have a respite in church and responsibilities to protect children."

The Rt Rev. Arnold C. Temple (Methodist Church in Sierra Leone) talked about people who are stateless. He shared a power-point presentation on birth registration in Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone has been involved in registration of birth because of the civil service establishment in the country. Despite this, it remains a great challenge to make sure people are registered. The church has been a vital contributor, not because it has helped out in civil registration, but because every baptism has been registered in church. Registers and certificates were issued. In time these certificates became registration documents in the absence of a civil registration certificate. It becomes difficult when children are born in a village in a remote area. But the churches are grass-root movements reaching even the most remote areas. The baptism certificate becomes important when other certificates are missing, particularly for identifying and giving children rights. Usually traditional birth attendance will be in hiding, also within villages, people are not allowed to come forth with their activity. But the church allows them to come forward. Birth attendants will come and be given a shield. A birth attendant who delivered child number thousand was celebrated in church, and the registration of the child became part of that exercise. It is a vital right of the child to be registered and receive the benefit of being a national.

The moderator thanked Bishop Temple and said that people should write to all the governments and tell them how important it is to welcome a child by registration. She then went on to introduce the next speaker.

Rev. Jennie Nordin (Church of Sweden) member of the core group for the development of Principles for Child-friendly Churches, showed a power point presenting the Church of Sweden "Pilgrimage of Children and Youth – Climate Justice, Faith and Peace". We are called by God to be stewards and have the mutual responsibility to seek to eliminate unjust use and distribution of resources. The church has developed an organisational child impact assessment. She said that when entering the room, she had seen two stewards busy closing the doors to the plenary after participants entered. One of them did the thumbs up to another participant who were closing the doors, thus helping out. This is a good picture of how we relate to each other, and what it means to be young in the church today. It also shows the importance of creating safe spaces for children and youth. We must walk together.

Bishop Petra Bosse-Huber (Evangelical Church in Germany), shared about the current situation of child refugees in Germany and the efforts by the Evangelical Church in Germany to welcome and help children in parishes, shelters and schools. Child rights in Germany are far from being fully respected and protected. Still the fate of over 8,500 children is unknown.

The moderator opened the floor for comments.

Rev. Cora L. A. Matamoros (Moravian Church in Nicaragua) thanked the speakers and said that this is one of the most difficult topics in the church. The reality of children in Latin America, especially when it comes to the indigenous areas, is very difficult. She asked how can we coordinate the member churches of the WCC to become more proactive with respect to the theme, so that in the next ten years we can see some sort of change and transformation and so that children suffer less. As a pastor and a mother she asked how can we support the women in the church and help women who are leaders. We have to take care of church members, but sometimes we say that women leaders take care of everyone outside the house, but in the house there is no one to take care of them.

Padi Rex R. B. Reyes, Jr. (Episcopal Church in the Philippines) reminded the floor not to forget children in communities where parents are at the forefronts of fighting for rights, against companies and firms destroying the forests. What about these children, witnessing their parents killed? There are so many children who are part of the internally displaced people.

H.E. Metropolitan Serafim Kykotis said that in Zimbabwe today, 100 children died because there is lack of food, and there is no education. There are babies with no place, other than that of animals. Homeless children are threatened to be killed, and thousands of them were already killed. It makes me think of Christ, who was threatened to be killed as a child. Why do children die in Syria, in Zimbabwe? We have to remember the role of WCC. Unfortunately European Christians were involved in the apartheid and in colonization in Africa. What is said about speaking to the governments is very important. Millions are spent for NGOs to protect people suffering from conflict, and 50% of them are children. We are grateful for help. But what portion of all help is going to the children? The role of WCC is important in this matter.

Dr Hutabarat-Lebang thanked for the responses. She said that we have to work together with people of different faiths, and of good will, and that is what we are trying to do. A refugee camp we cannot run alone, but together with different communities in our society we can.

Ms Sabine Rakotomalala responded that the role of fathers and men is more and more important and has a huge impact when it comes to giving space to women. UNICEF has a peacekeeping mechanism in order to try to hold governments accountable to violations, so there are accountability mechanisms to say that what you are doing is not right, and it will be discussed at the UN Security Council level, even

though it takes many years. We have to stop so much money going only to emergency and also remember development. We need to find a balance to be able to continue development work.

Dr Theodora Issa (Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch and All the East) said that she had already expressed her opinion on twitter. She was stunned to see that the children of Syria and Iraq were not been represented. She had heard last night that girls at the age of ten and even less are being forced to marry. If the prince is sick and tired of her, he will get rid of her and she will become a prostitute to be used by ISIS. Children are uprooted from their homeland, living on donations. Churches have been destroyed, where will these children go?

H.E. Metropolitan Eustathius Matta Roham (Syrian Orthodox Church of Antioch and All the East) said he found the Church of Sweden initiative to put climate change in the curriculum of the Sunday school interesting. But it is not enough. He shared a story of his sister´s child in Sweden, being beaten in school, being advised by his elder brother to take revenge. But the young boy regretted and told his brother never to tell him to go and do this again. What is our response when there is violence? We need to teach our children their rights, and how they can defend themselves against violence, without violent measures. The WCC can take this to churches and to governments.

Rev. Klaas van der Kamp (Council of Churches in the Netherlands) observed that if theology is part of the reflection, we must remember that sometimes theology is part of the problem. We sometimes face misuse of texts, like the commandment of honouring your father or mother. And sometimes churches deny that they have a problem with creating safe spaces for children.

Ms Caterina Tino responded to comments on children in Syria. She said that the group wanted to underline what churches are doing. By no means they intended to avoid addressing the suffering of children in emergency situations all over the world. Looking at what churches can do in emergency contexts, and many live in such situations, churches and faith communities are often the first responders because churches are already there. They will also stay when the emergency organisations leave. Church communities have a key role to play in supporting the communities in emergency situations. We need to pay particular attention to how we protect children in such situations. In crises children are the most vulnerable, they are particularly exposed to violence, arms, trafficking, wounds, etc.

Dr Hutabarat-Lebang said that as we promote the dignity of children, as churches we need to look into our theological understanding, how we treat our children in our families and lives. Respecting parents is sometimes being used to stop children from expressing themselves. It may lead to children losing their confidence. So this is a task, to look into our theological understanding.

The plenary ended with a prayer.

Mr Kuchera said that Jesus snuck away from his parents and went to a temple to discuss faith issues before he began his ministry. As parents and grandparents you would be happier to have your children missing and found in church than in any other place. We therefore ask you to go back and think about how we can make churches more child friendly. He invited central committee members to go write a pledge on a graffiti wall made available. He said the group is open to suggestions and improvements of the document. He ended by inviting the general secretary to the podium and dance to the drums.

8. Public issues

8.1. Introduction to the Public issues

On 23 June, in a hearing session, the vice-moderator, H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima called on Mr Peter Prove, the director of CCIA, to present the public issues. Mr Prove invited Bishop

Samuel Robert Azariah (Church of Pakistan), the moderator of the public issues committee, to take part in the presentation. Bishop Azariah reminded the central committee of the opportunity to submit issues in addition to those that have been prepared. One should not only mention an issue, but submit a proposal in writing to the public issues committee.

Mr Prove presented the following drafts (Doc. No. GEN PUB 04): 1) Statement on religion and Violence, 2) Statement on Israel and Palestine Conflict and Peace process, 3) Statement on Forced Displacement/Refugee and Migrant Crisis, and 4) Statement on Civil Society Space.

For information only, Mr Prove then presented Doc. No. GEN PUB 03, which is summary of actions that have been undertaken since the last meeting of the central committee. He then referred to the document on procedures GEN PUB 02, par. 6, and cited the procedures for making statements in case of emergent circumstances and situations arising immediately before or during meetings of the central committee which are considered to warrant a public statement without the normal preparatory process.

Bishop Azariah invited the floor to make comments or ask questions of clarification.

H.E. Metropolitan Eustathius Matta Roham said that he would like to remind the assembly of the terrorist attack that aimed at killing the patriarch of his church. This is the first attack on an Oriental Orthodox church in this century, and we would like to see WCC acknowledging this and say that it is not acceptable, not only against a church leader, but for the sake of the safety of all people in the Middle East.

Dr Andrej Jeftić (Serbian Orthodox Church) said that he would like to see the full draft of the public issues statements well in advance, as it is suggested in the rules, and that he could not remember having received them.

Mr Prove responded that they had been greatly alarmed and concerned receiving the news about the attack. He then explained that the statements are not yet available in the full text versions, only through the summaries. He apologised for not having all the drafts available. He also said that if there are concerns that the central committee would like to raise, the public issues committee will do their best to include them in the text that will be presented in the plenary for action.

The summaries of the Proposals for Public Issues were received by consensus.

The vice-moderator, H.E. Metropolitan Prof.Dr Gennadios of Sassima, informed the house that the texts would now be referred to the public issues committee for further work before the texts are presented to the plenary for decision.

8.2. First Report of the public issues committee

On 24 June 24, Bishop Dr Mary Ann Swenson called on the moderator of the public issues committee, Bishop Samuel R. Azariah, to report from the public issues committee.

Bishop Azariah explained that it was too early to give a full report, but the committee had gone through the agenda and the process in which they will move forward. The committee had discussed the document on religion and violence. The document GEN PUB 03 Add, an expression of the sad events in Orlando, Florida in June, and another document on security and safe space are on the agenda. Nine other issues had been proposed, and the committee will get back with a report on these.

Bishop Dr Swenson thanked Bishop Azariah for the additional documents.

The central committee received the documents by consensus and referred them to the public issues committee.

8.3. Discussion on "Brexit"

On 24 June Dr Agnes Abuom announced the recent decision on "Brexit" and asked the moderator of the public issues committee, whether a statement could be drafted regarding the referendum which has taken place in Britain.

Bishop Azariah responded that a draft has been made and will be circulated. A statement is expected from the Archbishop of Canterbury, as well as from the Conference of European Churches (CEC).

Another proposal to produce a statement regarding the peace treaty which was signed in Colombia, came from a member church and is a reason for joy. A draft statement on the issue will be coming from public issues committee, for action by the central committee. Mr Peter Prove was asked to read the statement. He acknowledged that the text had not been reviewed by the public issues committee, due to time, before he read the draft. Dr Abuom thanked the committee for the swift reaction and asked the floor for comments.

Dr Fernando Enns thanked the committee for the quick response. He shared his concern that at the end of the text we are addressing the British people. However, we should also address the rest of Europe, with a note to the EU and the rest of us, underlining that we have to rethink what is the basic ground on which we build our union. We have lost track of the vision of creating this union on certain values, and put too much emphasis on economy. What is the basis of our union?

The central committee supported this proposal.

Rt. Rev. Dr Robert Innes (Church of England) said that this was a sad day for Britain and for Europe as a whole. He referred to an excellent statement issued by the CEC, challenging European leaders to find a common ground, to catch the hearts and minds of Europe. There is something which is out of touch with people. There is a need for an EU that connects with values and hearts, not simply with economy.

The central committee supported the proposal.

Rev. Everdith Y. Landrau (Presbyterian Church [USA]) said that it is important to acknowledge the sovereignty and democracy of the people of the UK, with more than 30 million voters. As we seek unity, we need to respect the decision of a whole nation.

Rev. Dr Cornelia Füllkrug-Weitzel (Evangelical Church in Germany) agreed that the statement should not address the UK people mainly, out of respect for their sovereignty, but address churches as well as governments to increasingly turn to values, and not to increase nationalism.

Rt Rev. Alan F. Abernethy (Church of Ireland) said that the statement should include three points: acknowledge that democracy has spoken and honour that; secondly, it should not only focus on the EU, but that this is a serious issue for the UK, which itself is at stake. Thirdly, it should say that one of the tragedies was that migrants and refugees were used on both sides as pawns. We must speak up for the voiceless people.

Rev. Dr Angelique Walker-Smith (National Baptist Convention USA, Inc.) said that as a citizen of the USA, she would want the statement to be as broad as possible, as we see this happen also in the USA. We need to say where the statement is coming from, remembering that we talked about unity this morning, and unity is a value. We also need to offer our prayers, speaking from faith and out of the context in which we take this action.

Fr Iakovos Andriopoulos (Church of Greece) said that the tone of the document needs to be directed towards the experience of union. Sometimes the feeling is that the union is a bureaucracy disconnected with our fellow European brothers.

Rev. Canon Dr. Leslie Nathaniel (Church of England) said it should be visible that the churches need each other. The tone of the statement will have to relate to the European commission, not so much to the parliament. The churches need to have a theological reasoning.

Rev. Silishebo Silishebo (United Church in Zambia) said that we must invite our God to be involved in what is happening in the world. We should have a tone of prayer, inviting God in.

Prof. Dr Dimitra Koukoura (Ecumenical Patriarchate) reminded the audience that this morning we spoke about unity in Christ, but that EU is based on unity of economy. As a candidate of last year´s "Grexit", I think we need to point out that Europe itself is fragile because it has neglected human values and human dignity. Thousands of refugees pass by, and this should not be the face of Europe. This is not about the British people, this is about Europe.

Dr Agnes Abuom thanked the plenary for the inputs and said that a draft final statement would be brought back to the plenary. At the same time she said that this is a reminder of the fragile nature of the globe we live in, hence the need for us to move forward for unity.

The central committee agreed that a statement in an amended version should be issued.

The general secretary proceeded to introduce two visitors from Ukraine, who were invited to the public issues committee.

8.4. First Reading of the Public Issues Report

On Saturday, 25 June, Dr Agnes Abuom moderated the hearing session, and explained that decisions would be taken later. She invited Bishop Samuel R. Azariah to give a report on the work of the public issues committee. Besides the four prepared statements, there were eight other issues that had been proposed by the plenary. Five statements were ready to be presented.

GEN PUB 05.03 Statement on outcome of the UK referendum on EU membership ('Brexit').

Bishop Azariah proceeded to present the statement. The statement was projected on screen and read paragraph by paragraph.

Bishop Dr Chibuzo R Opoko (Methodist Church Nigeria) suggested that instead of UK voters, one should put UK citizens.

Rev. Dr Fernando Enns (Mennonite Church in Germany) asked for a clarification regarding what is included by the phrase "This present a challenge to…"

Ms Janet Scott (Churches Together in England) asked about the audience of the statement. She asked the word "undeniable" be removed. It is an indication that European identity has not been articulated, but there are so many different reasons why the UK people voted as they did.

Dr Dimitra Koukoura (Ecumenical Patriarchate) asked about the purpose of the statement and suggested that one should avoid giving the impression that the EU is a paradise and that British are not there. What about human values that are not part of the EU itself? Christianity is open to multiple perspectives. Should we pray for them to be united in order to be European? They are united and they are European.

Bishop Alan F. Abernethy (Church of Ireland) said that he was not quite sure there is such a thing as an articulated European value. We must take care not be unfair to the UK voters, because we cannot be sure what they really were voting about.

Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit said that when we say shared values and refer it to a political institution, we have to say what value we actually mean, e.g. human rights, willingness to share in a fair way. Shared values can be seen as economic principles, but here we mean something else.

Mr Peter Prove explained that the committee had attempted to broaden the appeal. Who exactly we are addressing is deliberately vague since we think of more receivers. We want to express the hope and the prayer that a vision for Europe might be revitalized. The issue of values is a fundamental question and ought to be acknowledged in this statement.

Rev. Canon Dr Leslie Nathaniel (Church of England) said that the issue of shared values is articulated in the statement of Bishop Christopher Hill and the Conference of European Churches. He suggested deleting the sentence on the outcome.

Dr Audeh B. Quawas (Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem) suggested a small addition on a crucial issue, which is migration. Mr Peter Prove inserted and read "Including the refugee and migrant crisis".

Dr John Nduna (ACT Alliance) suggested inserting a biblical text. Dr Nathaniel supported the suggestion to include a scriptural reference, to express solidarity, a reference that would give a message to the world that the churches are engaged in solidarity with each other.

Mr Prove suggested that the issue of ecumenical solidarity could be inserted in the top of the paragraph:, … and ecumenical solidarity"..

Rev. Cora L. A. Matamoros said that it would be positive to stand up and hold hands, and hold up our hearts to the Father. We are talking about being united, and accepting our varieties. There are many biblical texts that can be used and before choosing the appropriate scriptural reference it is right to ask God for guidance.

Bishop Prof. Dr Martin Hermann Hein (Evangelical Church in Germany) said that if he was to think of one much used word in the thirteen years in WCC, it would be "challenge". What do we mean by challenge, and what are the challenges we are currently facing? We have to name them. He suggested nationalism as such a challenge as mentioned in line 4 of the statement. Mr Prove suggested including in the second paragraph a call to all European leaders, to address increasing nationalism.

The suggestion was agreed by the central committee.

H.E. Metropolitan Eusthatius Matta Roham (Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East) said that we are not talking about nationalism, but a situation out of which we can have emerging nationalism. Mr Prove said that we have to look at the use of the word nationalism, we have to differentiate between national identity and nationalism.

The central committee requested a revised statement based on the input from the floor.

GEN PUB 05.03 Resolution on Outcome of the Indigenous Peoples on Reconciliation Processes and Indigenous Peoples

Mr Peter Prove presented the resolution from the Conference on Reconciliation: Truth, Healing and Transformation, 20-21 June 2016. There were no comments to the resolution.

The central committee received by consensus the resolution on Indigenous Peoples.

GEN PUB 05.02 Statement on Colombian Bilateral Ceasefire Agreement.

Bishop Samuel R. Azariah read the third proposed statement.

Dr Audeh B. Quawas commented on the second paragraph, suggesting that it would be more appropriate with "armed opposition groups", because we should not indicate an insecure identity of the insurgent.

Rev. Gloria Ulloa Alvarado (Presbyterian Church of Colombia) clarified that FARC is expecting that the peace agreement could be signed on another date than what is indicated.

It was asked whether it would be all right to make a statement on something that has not yet been signed, and Mr Peter Prove explained that the agreement is reached, it is only the formal signing which still is to take place. If no date is agreed yet, we remove the issue.

Rev. Anne Heitmann (Evangelical Church in Germany) pointed out that it would not be wise to call on the general secretary in a statement to do this or that. The general secretary suggested that it could be rephrased, and that the central committee should not speak to the WCC, as it is the WCC. The line was corrected accordingly.

Dr Enns suggested that the central committee could commit itself, and either speak as the WCC or the central committee. He suggested that the recommendations could go to another document.

There was a discussion about on whose behalf the statement speaks.

Rev. Silishebo Silishebo (United Church of Zambia) suggested to leave out the whole of the sentence.

Dr John Nduna (ACT Alliance) said that it would be appropriate to include the ACT Alliance in the discussion.

Dr Quawas suggested that the paragraph would be stronger if we cut the reference to "in light of" in the sentence "In light of the general secretary´s meeting with …, the central committee commits itself…".

Rev. Cora L. A. Matamaros (Moravian Church in Nicaragua) suggested that the WCC president from Colombia should be mentioned. The statement should therefore mention the general secretary and the president of the WCC. It is the highest authority of the organisation between meetings of governing bodies.

With the comments received, the central committee approved the statement by consensus.

GEN PUB 05.04 Statement on Religion and Violence

The statement was projected and read paragraph by paragraph.

Dr Quawas proposed that the recent attack on His Holiness the Syrian Orthodox Patriarch Ignatius Aphraim as well as the Orlando shootings should be included.

Dr Koukoura, suggested to also include the assassination of the British deputy member of Parliament.

Dr Theodora Issa (Syrian orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East) said that the UK assassination was not religiously motivated.

Mr Joyanta Adhikari (Bangladesh Baptist Church Sangha) asked whether targeted killings of Christians and Hindus and Buddhists have been included or not in the statement.

Mr Peter Prove explained that there are so many incidents that the public issues committee decided not to include a list, but to focus on only two incidents as events that illustrate the connection between religion and violence.

Rev. Everdith Y. Landrau (Presbyterian Church [USA]) said the Orlando killings were related to hate and had to do with religion aside from the sexual identity, and that these issues must not be confused.

The additional comments were sent back to the public issues committee for further work.

GEN PUB 05.05 Statement on the Forced Displacement

The statement was projected on screen and read paragraph by paragraph.

Rev. Canon Aida C. Sanchez-Navarro (The Episcopal Church, Honduras) said that it is a sensitive issue. What is being taking into account in this statement demonstrates the pilgrimage of justice peace. She expressed gratitude for the statement.

The central committee approved the statement by consensus.

8.5. 2nd Reading of the Public Issues Report

On 27 June, Rev. Dr Sara Rogers (Church in Wales) and Mr Thomas Kang, representing Bishop Samuel R. Azariah, presented the members of the public issues committee. The central committee acknowledged their work through applause.

GEN PUB 05.01 Statement on outcome of the UK referendum on EU membership – 'Brexit' (2nd reading)

The revised statement was read and the floor was opened for discussion.

Dr Pillay commented on the third paragraph, and asked to include a few words in the end of the paragraph: "…in the interest of building human community."

Mr Kang suggested it should read: "including the *situation of* refugees and migrants" instead of "crisis".

Mrs Anne Glynn-Mackoul (Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East) suggested keeping the word crisis reading: "*including the political crisis in receiving* refugees and migrants". This would indicate that we are in a crisis with regards to welcoming refugees and migrants.

Dr Quawas asked which community is not human, and whether the word was necessary.

H.E. Metropolitan Serafim Kykotis (Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa) suggested at the end of the fourth paragraph, after "demands" to add: "the message of the referendum of UK in Brussels and the members is to work for social solidarity and social justice for Europe and for the countries suffering of poverty in order to show our repentance for what we did to them in the past through the colonial rule, and for the good of humanity." The climate change today and colonialism are related. We have to carry on policies as a uniqueness of the churches, and no compromise with the European Union.

Bishop Dr Martin H. Hein (Evangelical Church in Germany) disagreed with the suggested amendment, because we do not know whether we are in a position to judge the message of the referendum. There is a strong objection in Britain against the bureaucracy in Brussels, and national rights were in question. Therefore he argued to delete the sentence and conclude the statement by Bishop Christopher Hill that describes the consequences.

The moderator tested the floor and the proposed amendment was not accepted.

The central committee approved the revised document by consensus.

GEN PUB 05.08 A call for Solidarity and Action for Puerto Rico (1st reading)

The call was read and the floor was opened for discussion.

Mrs Anne Glynn-Mackoul (Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East) said that the call makes no mention of vulture funds who have swept over Puerto Rico. If the funds are to be taken out, it would be important to name the economic injustice that is taking place. She suggested mentioning vulture funds specifically.

Rev. Dr June Totten (American Baptist Churches in the USA) suggested the statement go back to the committee, naming the issue of the explosives that have been left on the island, so that land cannot be used. We have to say clearly that we have to take the explosives away so that the space can be used.

H.E. Eustathius Matta Roham spoke to paragraph 6, and suggested to shift the name to first paragraph where it would fit better to say that the document comes from WCC.

Fr Iakovos Andriopoulos (Church of Greece) spoke to the third paragraph, third sentence, and suggested adding after "disadvantages", "making it susceptible to predatory lending, infringing on its rights to self-determination." He also suggested a clarification on the fourth paragraph: "the island is facing a massive migration wave to the *continental* United States".

The central committee referred the document back to the public issues committee in order to address the proposed amendments.

GEN PUB 05.07 Minute on Human Trafficking (1st reading)

The minute was read and the floor was opened for discussion.

Metropolitan Serafim suggested adding after Latin America: "and in countries suffering of poverty and conflict, like in Asia, Africa and the Middle East".

Mr Kang responded to this that the idea was to be specific about Latin America. We acknowledge that human trafficking does happen all over the world, but we now addressed the specific situation of Latin America.

Dr Agnes Abuom noted that when the central committee met two years ago it was especially Latin America that was addressed, but since then organ trafficking has become big also in Africa.

Ms Glynn-Mackoul noted that this is a global phenomenon.

Metropolitan Serafim suggested that the solution could be to leave reference to all countries, and rather say that this is a global problem. It is very important to include Africa.

Ms Emily Evans (Uniting Church in Australia) said that half of the victims are under 18 years of age. We should add the statistic from UN that "70 % are women and girls*".*

Fr Iakovos Andriopoulos suggested it to read: "However it is estimated…, 70 % are women and girls, and unfortunately …, according to the UN.".

Bishop Alan F. Abernethy (Church of Ireland) suggested removing "sadly", using the term "devastating" instead.

Ms Ana Maria V. de Medio (Evangelical Church of Disciples of Christ, Argentina) expressed appreciation that the concern is being raised. Human trafficking is a crime against the human race. We can see it on the website of Interpol.

Rev. Silishebo Silishebo said that one motivation for this is poverty and conflict, whereas another motivation is by rich and greedy people. He suggested removing countries suffering from poverty and conflict and replace it with "and other countries in Africa and the Middle East".

It was said that trafficking is increasing also in the US, and young people on the margins are suffering from this, so we should include other countries as well.

The Very Rev. Ray Coster (Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand) said that human trafficking takes place around the world, the degree may differ, but human dignity is the same all over the world. He suggested leaving the paragraph as it was presented, but we need to talk about human dignity too.

Mr Joyanta Adhikari (Bangladesh Baptist Church Sangha) said that though we admitted that this is a global phenomenon, we still have included only two continents, which is not fair.

The central committee referred the document back to the public issues committee in order to address the proposed amendments.

8.6. 2nd Reading of the Public Issues Report (continued)

GEN PUB 05.06 Minute on human trafficking and migrant smuggling (2nd reading)

The suggested changes to paragraphs were read again, among them the title: "Minute on human trafficking and migrant smuggling". The floor was opened for discussion.

Metropolitan Serafim commented on the second line: "countries of poverty and conflict, in Asia, Africa and the Middle East", where it is deleted. He expressed his disagreement and asked that Africa and Asia be included. The solution must be to introduce a small paragraph. The rapporteur replied that it had been included in paragraph 4.

Bishop Dr Opoko asked whether human trafficking is related to poverty. We said no in the 2014 consultation in Colombo, and in Sri Lanka. It is a global phenomenon, and has to do with greed and exploitation. It can be seen in relation to poverty, but it is not the reason. The people who engage in trafficking are rich, the mafia that works globally.

The rapporteur replied that this can be found in the next paragraph about the global phenomenon.

Metropolitan Serafim reiterated that he wanted to see that Asia, Africa and the Middle East was included. He thought that this also was the view of AACC.

Dr Abuom confirmed that this indeed is the concern of AACC. But in paragraph 4, the committee felt that the phrase indicated that what has happened in Latin America has had an impact on all regions of the world.

The central committee approved the statement by consensus.

GEN PUB 05.08 A call for Solidarity and Action for Puerto Rico (2nd reading)

The rapporteur read the changes made by the public issues committee.

The central committee approved the call by consensus.

8.7. Final Reading of the Report of the public issues committee

On 28 June, in a decision session, the final actions on the Public issues committee report were taken.

GEN PUB 05.07 Minute on Human Rights situation in West Papua

Mr Thomas Hyeono Kang from the public issues committee explained that this issue had been deferred from the central committee meeting in 2014, and read the proposed statement.

Rev. Kristi (Gereja Kristen Java [GKJ]) said that the Communion of Churches in Indonesia (PGI) support the statement, and have done so for years.

Dr Fransina Yoteni (Gereja Kristen Injili Di Tanah Papua [GKITP]), said on behalf of the Pacific churches and the people on West Papua that we walk together on the journey for justice and peace, and she expressed gratitude for the support of the WCC and the central committee.

The central committee approved the statement by consensus.

GEN PUB 05.09 Statement on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict and Peace Process

Mr Kang from the public issues committee read the proposed statement.

Bishop Dr Hein said that he personally, and also other members of the German delegation, think that paragraph 7 is too one-sided. The situation is an evil circle of violence. We do not want to block the statement, but the German delegation will not approve on this paragraph because it is too one-sided. Our abstention to be recorded.

Rev. Canon Dr Leslie Nathaniel (Church of England) expressed the same opinion. The statement comes at a time of key discussions. We do not want to work with this kind of sentence because it the wrong signal in the face of important negotiations ahead of us. We want to be in a position to dialogue and to negotiate. He then suggested deleting that one sentence.

Rev. Dr Samson Olasupo Adeniyi Ayokunle (Nigerian Baptist Convention) said that we should not quote only one side if we want to be peacemakers. We need to bring in both points of view.

Dr Marie-Christine Michau (United Protestant Church of France) said that as a member of her church she would support the German delegation. She suggested to have a sentence on responsibility of violence on both sides, so we can continue to be in dialogue with both parties.

Bishop Sally Dyck (United Methodist Church) said that there are pockets of places where people are able to come together and be together. She too might abstain from voting on this.

Dr Quawas said that he could agree with deleting the sentence provided that somebody could convince him that it is not expressing what is going on the ground. If we will not recognize the facts on the ground, he did not think there is even a need for a statement on Palestine and Israel. This is the reality, and this is the only statement which speaks about the reality on the ground.

Rev, Karin van den Broeke (Protestant Church in the Netherlands) said that the hesitation also goes for the Netherlands. It is too difficult to mention only this part of the conflict and not to mention the fear living on the other side.

Rev. Silishebo Silishebo appreciated the important, valuable and helpful insights to accompany our dialogue. He suggested asking four people who have experience in drafting and dealing with these issues come together and make a redraft.

Dr Nathaniel suggested a change in recommendation no. 5 by adding full stop after "…the danger of using scripture to in any way justify occupation." H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Bishoy of Damietta (Coptic Orthodox Church) asked that the rest of the sentence be kept, as Christian Zionism in harming all the confessions in the region. The general secretary also warned against deleting it, as it otherwise would be perceived as support to Christian Zionism. Dr Quawas agreed with keeping the full text.

Rev. Miriam Spies (United Church of Canada) said she understood the need to be in interfaith dialogue. But one of the reasons she herself is a member of her church, is for promoting the role and voice of the marginalised. The church is to be the voice of the marginalized and listen to the voices of those who suffer oppression, and we must be fair on this. The WCC must accompany also those who are in need under the occupation. We cannot equate the situation of people on both sides of the conflict. The injustices and pressure are increasing on the human voice and human dignity. It is a horrifying reality. She urged the Council to remember this type of justice, which must be addressed.

Rev. Anne Heitmann (Evangelical Church in Germany) said that many people do not know what Christian Zionism is and it is not explained anywhere. One thing is the interpretation of scripture, but another thing is the issue of extremism.

H.E. Metropolitan Eustathius Matta Roham (Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East) said that when looking at the whole Christian body, something should be said, especially about the indigenous Christian Palestinian communities. They must be included, and by adding "especially" in point 5 of the statement we also include other churches.

The proposal to add "especially" to point 5 was agreed.

The moderator of the public issues committee went on to read the revision of the introduction part of the statement.

Ms Glynn-Mackoul asked for a clarification in paragraph 7, whether the drafters mean dialogue between the people and the government, or between the two peoples and their governments. Dr Quawas supported the question, because there is a block between the two governments. He suggested to add "peoples" in plural.

The amendment was agreed.

Dr Quawas suggested that in point 3, after "local Christians and member churches" to add a point e): "supporting the church leaders in their difficult role to maintain and strengthen the Christian presence in the Middle East, the cradle of Christianity".

Rev. Sarah Moore (United Reformed Church) suggested that instead of "churches" it could be rephrased to "church leaders". Metropolitan Matta Roham said he would not be satisfied with the church leaders, the support should go to the whole community, not to the hierarchy.

Dr Quawas suggested that under point 4, the last sentence, the following wording be added: "… and through the member churches of the WCC and the Palestine and Israel Ecumenical Forum (PIEF)."

Ms Teny Pirri-Simonian (Armenian Apostolic Church [Holy See of Cilicia]) suggested removing the proposed point 3 e) and list it separately, as a new point 8.

The amendment was agreed.

The central committee approved the statement by consensus.

GEN PUB 05.04 Statement on Religion and Violence

Mr Kang, member of the public issues committee, read the statement after the original recommendation 3 had been deleted.

Dr Enns suggested that the Decade to Overcome Violence from 2001-2010 be recalled. He also suggested that the last sentence in the last paragraph before the recommendations should read "the way of just peace" rather than "construction of just peace".

The amendment was agreed.

In recommendation 3 it was suggested to use the plural: "in contexts of religion and violence".

The amendment was agreed.

Ms Jennifer Mosher (Orthodox Church in America) referred to recommendation 6 and suggested to delete "of memories" from the concept of healing. Prof. Dr Dimitra Koukoura explained that "healing of memories" is a technical term referring to many ecumenical programmes. Ms Teny Pirri-Simonian said that one cannot go forward unless memories are healed. One needs to confront and heal memories, therefore we should keep the whole concept. It was suggested to rephrase the recommendation to "…initiatives for the healing of those who have suffered trauma, including the healing of memories, …"

The amendment was agreed.

Fr. Iakovos Andriopoulos (Church of Greece) spoke to recommendation 9, and suggested to remove "the possible link" and use "including the link between religious ideologies and violence, …".

The amendment was agreed.

Dr Marie-Christine Michau (United Protestant Church of France) spoke to recommendation 11. She suggested adding a sentence on the apostasies, to say that we include the people´s right to change their religion and their confession. It is a little difficult to address the question when speaking with Muslims, as they can experience that it may be a risk to their lives. But it is important that we as Christians say it,

there is the freedom of religion and choice in our countries, but not necessarily in their countries. I just want us to reaffirm the freedom to choose religion and to change that religion.

Fr. Iakovos Andriopoulos (Church of Greece) suggested that it be included in recommendation 7, *"including freedom of choice, …"*.

The amendment was carried.

The central committee approved the statement by consensus.

GEN PUB 05.05 Statement of the Forced Displacement Crisis

Mr Kang, member of the public issues committee, read the proposed statement.

Fr. Iakovos Andriopoulos suggested to add at the end of recommendation 6 "regional cooperation and reflect on the true spirit of these laws."

The amendment was agreed.

Rev. Dr Angelique Walker-Smith (National Baptist Convention USA, Inc.) spoke to recommendation 10, on the issue of tolerance and respect of races. She suggested adding after the Sustainable Development Goals: "and also welcomes the engagement of the UN International Decade for People of African Descent as one key framework for addressing such root causes."

The amendment was agreed.

Dr Koukoura referred to recommendation 12, and suggested to add "immediate" in the beginning of the sentence, to read: "Invites immediate wider ecumenical support…"

Dr Andrej Jeftic (Serbian Orthodox Church) said that we do not address the root causes of migrants and displacements, if we do not address those who are causing displacements and having an interest in it.

The amendment was agreed.

The central committee approved the statement by consensus.

Dr Quawas thanked the central committee for approving the statement on the West Papua, and asked that the next central committee prepare a statement on Western Sahara.

9. Programme

On 23 June, H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima, vice-moderator, moderated a hearing session and called the Bishop Dr Mary Ann Swenson to bring greetings.

Bishop Dr Swenson, vice-moderator, read greetings from ECLOF to the central committee.

H.E. Metropolitan Dr Gennadios then invited the moderator of the programme committee, Dr Sharon Watkins (Christian Church [Disciples of Christ] in the United States), to introduce the programme committee documents GEN PRO 02 to GEN PRO 11.

9.1. Documents to be referred to the programme committee

Dr Sharon Watkins gave an overview of the programme tasks ahead. A significant part of the session will focus on the WCC Strategic Plan 2014-2017, bringing together the WCC's work around five objectives:

1. Strengthening the fellowship
2. Witnessing together
3. Encouraging spirituality, reflection and formation
4. Building trust and understanding

5. Building inspiring and innovative communities

The review of the first period of the Strategic Plan 2014- 2017, will be the basis for preparing the next Strategic Plan 2018-2021. The work for preparing the next strategic plan begins already now.

GEN PRO 03 Progress Report on the implementation of the WCC Strategic Plan 2014-2017

Dr Watkins then went on to introduce the document, which presents a review of the work done and gives guidance for the plan as well as for the renewal of the WCC Strategic Plan.

GEN PRO 4 Report of the Gender Advisory Group

Ms Harriet Jane Olson (United Methodist Church, United Methodist Women), moderator of the Gender Advisory Group, introduced the document. Through all this time the WCC has responded to God's call to build a just community between women and men and we have not yet arrived there. We root our work in the word that women and men are equal in the eyes of God. Our mandate has been to advise on the process and the strategies of building a just community of women and men and to develop a dynamic process leading to the adoption of a gender justice policy. The members of the Gender Advisory Group were asked to stand up. The group has focused on five main areas. The recommendation of the group is that the central committee affirm the direction of the WCC's work on a just community of women and men as presented in the report of the Gender Justice Advisory Group.

GEN PRO 05 World Mission Conference – A Tentative Proposal

Metropolitan Dr Mor Geevarghese Coorilos (Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East, India), moderator of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism, introduced a tentative proposal on the 2018 World Mission Conference. Since 2005 the WCC has not organized a mission conference, because it organized a commemoration conference in 2010. Therefore to have a World Mission Conference between Busan and the next assembly is crucial. CWME hopes that the central committee would endorse the proposal to hold a World Mission Conference in 2018, 8-13 March, hopefully in Arusha, Tanzania.

The conference should be missional, ecumenical and African. The proposed theme of the conference is "Moving in the Spirit: Called to Transforming Discipleship". Moving in the spirit is a missional response to the Busan assembly, where it was said that we intend to move together. The second part of the theme is about authentic discipleship as agents of mission. The size of the conference would roughly be 700 participants (500 internationals, and 200 local or from the region). Since 1958 there has not been a mission conference in Africa, and Arusha agreed to host the conference. The expected expenditure would be 1.3 million CHF, where 0.9 million comes from the reserve. There is a hope to raise 0.9 million, to set aside 0.4 million for future conferences.

Metropolitan Mor Geevarghese Coorilos thanked the audience for their patient listening.

GEN PRO 06 The gift of Being – Called to be a Church of All and for All

Rev. Dr Henriette Hutabarat-Lebang (Gereja Toraja) introduced the document, and said that the Ecumenical Disabilities Advocacy Network (EDAN) urges the member churches to give feedback to the document for further work within the network. A great help for developing and reviewing the document has been the close communication with the Faith and Order Commission and the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism. The proposed recommendation is that the central committee approve the document and commend it to the member churches for further study.

GEN PRO 07 Religion and violence

Dr Hutabarat-Lebang then went on to introduce the document which follows up on the recommendation of the executive committee meeting in Cyprus, November 2014. It provides deep theological reflection on violence and religion, and also on violence against religion. The aim has been to look at religion and violence from the perspective of Christian faith, looking for an adequate ecumenical response to situations of violence, and to give different examples of religion and violence, also involving interreligious and intra-Christian perspectives. The document is recommended for further study and guidance.

Gen 08 Principle of Child-friendly Churches

Rev. Prof. Dr Jerry Pillay (Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa) introduced the document.

Ninety representatives from member churches and partners made contributions to the principles of the joint WCC and UNICEF's seminar in November 2014. More than 44 also contributed to the principles. The purpose of the document is to recognize children as agents of change. It also aims at recognizing that we have failed to meet needs, and that we need to oppose injustices. To strengthen churches' commitment to children as part of the common pilgrimage for justice and peace the following objectives are set and developed:

a) Supporting efforts by churches to prioritize children through a series of proposed common principles for churches to uphold.
b) Raising awareness of the resonance between the responsibilities towards children Christians bear, and children's rights as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
c) Promoting collaborative efforts to improve children's lives by sharing experiences and skills among WCC members and partner organizations.

GEN PRO 09 Pastoral letter on HIV response

Dr Pillay then went on to introduce this second document. This is the fourth decade of the churches' struggle against HIV, and the document recollects and reviews the responses that have taken place, and proposes steps forward to end HIV. The pastoral letter also reflects WCC struggle to combat HIV. The recommendation is that the central committee adopts the letter and follows up on the proposed actions outlined in the letter.

Dr Watkins explained the procedures for addressing programme issues. All the documents presented in this session are part of a report, shared with the central committee for information. Documents number 02, 10 and 11 are presented for information, while documents number. 03, 05, 06, 09, are proposed for action.

9.2. Discussion on documents to be referred to the programme committee

The Very Rev. Archimandrite Philaret (Russian Orthodox Church) raised a question regarding the purpose of the document on children's rights. The document reflects the view of UNICEF, rather than the position expressed by many churches participating in the preparatory process. The document seems to try to use children for political goals, saying less about the family.

Ms Ana Maria Velilla De Medio (Evangelical Church of the Disciples of Christ, Argentina) referred to a meeting in Rosario, inquiring about its follow up.

Rev. Dr Samson O. A. Ayokunle (Nigerian Baptist Convention) spoke to the document on children´s rights. He pointed out that these are challenges we have all over the world, not least in Nigeria, where we see how terrorists are using children for suicide bombing and suicide missions, using children to kill so many people by destroying themselves, too. He wanted to express a positive attitude about this

document and transform it from being merely recommendations on what churches and WCC will work on practically, to include commitment of the churches so that the future of children will be guaranteed.

Rev. Dr Sofia Camnerin (Uniting Church in Sweden) referred to the EDAN document "The Gift of Being", expressing her gratitude for this important theological document, challenging deeply rooted views on what gives human life meaning, addressing questions like from where comes our human value. As mother of a child with special needs, she shared her struggle with prejudice. Reflection on habits and how we include people for real is needed. Thank you also for the document on children´s rights. We also need to include more about children's gifts. Let us lift them up as gifts and part of our communities, and change our views and see them as being in a mission for God.

Bishop Dr Opoko (Methodist Church Nigeria), who participated in the production of the document on children's rights, said that many church leaders participated in drafting it and, therefore, wished to contest the view that this was a UNICEF document. It has been worked out in collaboration with UNICEF, but certainly also by the WCC. We would all agree that children are being abused today. Children are excluded. Their dignity, voices and contributions are not acknowledged. Without the children there will be no hope for the church. As church leaders we should include the children not only into the future, but into our leadership today. The document is a great resource and we should use it to give our children dignity.

Mme Conforte Houenou Bonou (Eglise Protestante Méthodiste du Benin) pointed out that we need to take the children by their hand and have them continue God's mission in the world. She therefore expressed delight in the fact that there will be a mission conference.

Rev. Silishebo Silishebo thanked the CWME for proposing to bring the World Mission Conference to Africa, providing a wonderful cause for celebration, he therefore urged the central committee to endorse the proposal. However, Africa is huge. We should therefore pay attention to the number of participants coming from Africa as a host region and consider increasing African participation up to 400.

Dr Ann K. Riggs (Religious Society of Friends: Friends General Conference, Kenya) also expressed her enthusiasm about bringing the World Mission Conference to Africa. Together with members of her church she would ask how indigenous peoples are included in the plans. Indigenous Peoples in Africa experience disruptions as other Indigenous Peoples do, but they are not considered as part of the Indigenous Peoples network. They have string challenges in their interaction with modernity like how to maintain their tribal self-understanding while at the same time taking advantage of new technologies. She expressed her hope that their concerns can be taken into account at the World Mission Conference.

Mme Conforte Houenou Bonou (Eglise Protestante Méthodiste du Benin) said that as an African she was very happy to hear that the next step of the pilgrimage is going to be in Africa. She hoped that the Holy Spirit will enable that. She reminded the central committee of its responsibility for enabling participants to travel, coming herself from a region that experiences many difficulties with visas and travel expenses. She urged the hosts to assist participants in attending.

Ms Kirsten Auken (Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark) expressed her excitement about the proposal for the next World Mission Conference. She asked the central committee to pay attention to the fact that the general assembly of the Lutheran World Federation will take place in Namibia in 2017. She then proposed that, when organizing the conference, one should consider how to make it a transformative event, providing participants with an opportunity to meet, not only to listen to documents. Face to face encounters are where real transformation can happen.

Dr Quawas asked for a programme on statelessness. Coming from a region where statelessness is a reality, he expressed his hope that it could be a programme priority in WCC.

Rev. Karin van den Broeke (Protestant Church in the Netherlands) congratulated the WCC with the framework for the Strategic Plan. Many topics have been mentioned for the next period, which causes for celebration. But one group is not mentioned: stateless people. This is an increasing group in the world, a group for which WCC has done a lot. Let us not forget them in the coming years, they are the voiceless that we need to speak up for.

Rt. Rev. Arnold Temple (Methodist Church Sierra Leone) gave thanks for the documents presented. Still, he missed a statement on the very recently ended epidemic of Ebola. He wished to commend the WCC for the engagement with the countries affected. At the end of the Ebola epidemic we celebrated, but many are left behind as a consequence of Ebola. He called for the attention of WCC to the needs of those who are left behind, orphans and widows and families without breadwinners.

Dr Watkins thanked the central committee and assured that careful notes were taken of the interventions, which will be taken to the committee for further work.

The central committee received the documents by consensus and referred them to the programme committee.

9.3. Report of the programme committee

On 28 June, Dr Agnes Aboum moderated a decision session. Rev. Dr Sharon Watkins. moderator of the programme committee, introduced the members of the committee, before reading the report and its recommendations with notes.

GEN 01 Moderator's address

The programme committee recommends to the central committee as follows:

1. The moderator's address to be received with appreciation.
2. The WCC become the platform for reflection and engagement on the rise of secularization, religious fanaticism and anti-religious extremism.
3. The implementation of a process to work together in addressing the issue of racism and transformation in significant ways.
4. The need to make the pilgrimage also attractive and invitational for young people, in the language that is understandable by young people.
5. The need to collate programmatic initiatives of member churches and explore the possibility of these becoming part of the WCC's Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace, where appropriate.

Ms Miriam Weibye (Church of Scotland) suggested to change the wording in point 4 on "language understandable by young people", to: "language accessible to all".

The change was accepted.

Rev. Dr Staccato Powell (African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church) asked where the recommendations will go for further view and possible action. The issue of racism is on the rise globally, but it is felt in a unique way in the USA. Where do the recommendations go, where will we begin to see some form of the recommendations?

Dr Abuom recommended that the whole report be read. Dr Quawas remarked that there would not be time to read the whole report. Dr Watkins suggested that the report go to staff for implementation, and reporting back to the central committee about the implementation.

The recommendations were approved by consensus.

GEN 03 Report of the general secretary

The programme committee recommended to the central committee to receive the report of the general secretary with appreciation.

The central committee received the report of the general secretary with appreciation.

Dr Quawas suggested moving note 3 up to the recommendations, because the HIV/AIDS programmes must be continued.

The proposed amendment was agreed by consensus.

Metropolitan Serafim requested a note 2, on Syria. For the last six years the international community has been divided. What is the role of the WCC in mobilizing the international community in the case of Syria? How can churches contribute?

Rev. Prof. Dr Jerry Pillay explained that the notes in the report are intended to give direction in terms of how we strengthen a particular recommendation. Recommendations are to be implemented, but notes are there to say that we do not want to lose certain highlighted issues.

The general secretary said it is important to be clear. We have to read what we mean as a recommendation. If it is a note, there may or may not be consensus. It may be confusing to move all notes to recommendations.

Rev. Yam Kho Pau (Myanmar Baptist Convention) suggested to leave the issue of HIV/AIDS, since there will be a separate statement on it.

Mr Thomas Hyeono Kang (Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Brazil) said that note 3 would not be excluded if it is included in the recommendations.

Dr Watkins suggested that the issue of human trafficking be added to recommendation 2.

It was clarified that even if an issue was not part of the general secretary's report, it can be part of the discussions of the central committee and therefore included in the recommendations.

The text suggested would read:

"2. The programmes on HIV and AIDS, climate change, violence against children, stateless people and human trafficking should be continued."

The suggestion was accepted.

The recommendations were approved by consensus.

GEN PRO 02 Recommendations of the central committee (July 2014) on programme work – an accountability report

The programme committee recommends to the central committee to receive the report with appreciation.

The recommendation was approved by consensus.

GEN PRO 03 Progress report on the implementation of the WCC Strategic Plan 2014-2017

The programme committee recommends to the central committee to receive the report with appreciation.

Rev. Dr Sofia Camnerin (Uniting Church in Sweden) said that the recommendation is too vague on questions regarding young people and proposed to add two recommendations: 1) Strengthen youth work in consultation with ECHOS and 2) Ensure different cultures, confessions and background in the stewards' programme.

Ms Miriam Weibye (Church of Scotland) suggested to also add EDAN and Indigenous Peoples, that their work be strengthened in consultation with the relevant networks.

The final proposal was read: The programme committee recommends to the central committee:

1. To receive the report with appreciation.
2. To ensure to strengthen the youth work in consultation with ECHOS,
3. To ensure the participation of young people from different confessional and geographical backgrounds in the stewards programme.
4. To ensure that all WCC work in the Strategic Plan incorporate the participation of EDAN, Indigenous Peoples and youth.

The recommendations were approved by consensus.

GEN PRO 04 Report of the Gender Advisory Group

The programme committee recommends to the central committee to:

1. Amend paragraph C.1. on page 5 to read as follows: "WCC central committee leadership and the Permanent Committee on Consensus and Collaboration develop new mechanisms which would lead to the implementation of this commitment. The Gender Advisory Group suggests amending the WCC Rules Par. VI.8.a.vi which calls for 'fair and adequate representation of lay persons, indigenous peoples, and differently-abled people, and balance of men, women and young people' to address ways in which ways each church and family of churches can achieve a fair and adequate representation and consider, among other things, whether some seats should be left vacant in order to avoid making the balances harder to achieve".
2. Affirm the direction of the Council's work on just community of women and men as presented in the Report of the Gender Advisory Group (GEN PRO 04), and approved
3. Request the executive committee, commissions, reference groups and the general secretary to study the relevant recommendations and to report back to the central committee in 2018 on actions taken.

The recommendations were approved by consensus.

GEN PRO 05 World Mission Conference

The programme committee recommends that the central committee approve the proposal of the CWME to hold a World Mission Conference in Arusha, Tanzania, from 8-13 March 2018 with the theme: 'Moving in the Spirit: Called to Transforming Discipleship'.

Rt Rev. Dr Festus Ambe Asana (Presbyterian Church in Cameroon) asked that consideration be given also to translation for deaf people. We have deaf people who can contribute a lot, but would need translation. Could this be added to the recommendations, or in note 2: "... and to provide for translation, including sign language".

The recommendations, with the addition, were approved by consensus.

GEN PRO 06 The Gift of Being – Called to be a Church of All and for All

The programme committee recommends to the central committee that:

1. Paragraphs 12 and 13 in the document be amended to read as follows: "12. We acknowledge that some theological viewpoints interpret human createdness in ways that are not favourable to persons with impairments, particularly cognitive impairments. Looking for 'the seat' of the image, some theologians asked wherein, the divine the image was to be found. The notion of being created in the image of God in terms of the human intellect came with considerable costs. It implied that human beings with profound intellectual and developmental impairments were not recognisable as truly human."
2. The amended document be adopted and commended it to member churches for further study.

Rev. Dr Sofia Camnerin (Uniting Church on Sweden) said that this is an incredibly important text and it should be adopted, translated, and implemented back home.

Mrs Anne Glynn-Mackoul (Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East) asked that the amended document be distributed electronically, so we are able to use the document.

The recommendations were approved by consensus.

GEN PRO 07 Religion and violence

The programme committee recommends that the central committee:

1. Receive the study document as a valuable contribution to the reflection on religion and violence;
2. Refer the document to the reference group on interreligious dialogue to consider the suggestions made by the central committee and present a new draft of the document to the next executive committee for approval; and
3. Request the executive committee to take up religion and violence, non-violence and peace building as an important subject for the development of the Council's work in the coming years.

Dr Watkins made some editing corrections to the recommendations as well as the notes.

Bishop Youannes (Coptic Orthodox Church) protested because the document was not distributed in advance. It was therefore absurd to invite for comments and adoption.

Dr Watkins explained that the programme committee had some concern regarding the Doc. No. GEN PRO 07, but that they knew some of the concerns were addressed by GEN PRO 07.1. She said it would be necessary to call on the reference group to understand all the concerns very well.

Dr Quawas noted that GEN PRO 07.1 was not a document for action, but for information. If the amended document is available, it should be an appendix to the recommendation 2. If we delete 07.1 from the heading of the document, we have to delete note 1, so it will be in accordance with the heading of the paragraph.

Dr Watkins clarified that input from the central committee does not only mean from the central committee meeting, but input that would come by 15 October 2016.

Rev. Cora L. Antonio Matamoros thanked the moderator of the programme committee for the support that has been received from the programme committee. She suggested an addition to recommendation 1, that biblical institutions and theological seminaries of the member churches could adopt the document. Sunday schools and Christian education programmes could adopt it for children, given the importance of this particular document. If the central committee members can accept the document GEN PRO 07, it would be very much appreciated.

The general secretary explained that the intention is that the document would be made available for institutions as well as for studies in congregations. However, we can only invite member churches to receive it. Obviously, it would still be possible to commend it to other partners and institutions as a study document.

Rev. Cora L. Antonio Matamoros replied that it would be very positive if member churches, as a sign of their commitment to the fellowship, could emphasise that they should report on how they are dealing with the issue of violence.

The general secretary said that we should, on the one hand, encourage institutions to study the document and, on the other, to ask member churches to report back. This does not particularly concern the document itself, but the issues dealt with in the document. He suggested to refer the document to the reference group for further work, and to request the executive committee to take up the issue of religion and violence.

Bishop Simo Peura (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland) referred to note 3, which gives more description to the title of the document. It could also be made a recommendation.

Metropolitan Serafim spoke to note 5. He understands that members of the central committee are to present the position of their churches by 15 October 2016, not the position of academics or experts. While we talk about religion and violence, we have an example from Paris, where there was no respect of the freedom of another religion. What do we mean by freedom? To humiliate other religions?

Rev. Prof. Dr Fernando Enns (Mennonite Church in Germany) said that there had not been the opportunity to go into detail and discuss the document, but it really is a topic for all of the churches. It is important to have some critical and self-critical dialogue on the topic in this house. We should take the document back home to our churches and institutions, study it carefully and discuss it properly. This is an opportunity to deeply enter into the issue. The programme committee decided to send the document back, not because it is bad, but because we do not want to produce another statement, we want to stay on this topic and study and discuss it further. It is like Rev. Cora Matamoros said, let us use the document as a starting point for a longer process. He then proposed that the recommendation be changed to bring the document back to the central committee in two years for adoption, which will allow us a proper process. This is a topic for the central committee.

Fr Iakovos Andriopoulos (Church of Greece) said that the main point is that the document as it now stands is not one that should be distributed to any schools. It needs to be revised, sent back to the central committee, approved, and then be distributed to the churches and institutions. There are a lot of issues that still need to be addressed.

Dr. Quawas said he disagreed that the document should go to the next central committee without passing through the executive committee first.

The general secretary suggested that either the document should be sent to theological institutions to collect their feedback, or we should have a process in place to take it to the next central committee before it is sent to other institutions.

Prof. Dr Marina Kolovopoulou (Church of Greece) agreed with Dr Quawas' proposal about including the executive committee in the process of the document.

Rev. Dr Angelique Walker-Smith said that the ecumenical formation commission is also available. Should the document go to our commissions and committees and so forth? The commissions, where institutions and faculties are actually represented, can be useful.

Ms Teny Pirri-Simonian (Armenian Apostolic Church [Holy See of Cilicia]) thanked the reference group for the work. She said that there is a need for more voices from the member churches, from people living with interfaith experience, in order to give more complete representation.

The general secretary suggested that the document be referred to the executive committee, who can plan for a process on how this is to be worked on, and how institutions and member churches should be involved, in light of the discussion at the central committee.

Rev. Dr June Totten (American Baptist Churches in the USA) suggested that the WCC Faith and Order Commission be involved.

The general secretary said the inputs of the central committee would be valuable, and must be part of the process that the executive committee is asked to put in place.

Dr Quawas said that the executive committee will work on improving the document. Notes no. 1 and 5 must be deleted.

Dr Enns strongly opposed Dr Quawas' proposal. He said that what we are trying to do here is to involve the central committee members as far as possible. We have witnessed how delicate the issue of religion and violence is. We have studied it; we have made notes and want to contribute. This can only help us. Please accept the proposal by the programme committee. Dr Marie-Christine Michau (United protestant Church of France) expressed her agreement, since this is a subject that concerns us all and will be beneficial for everyone.

Dr Watkins clarified that when text appears in the notes rather than the recommendation, the document is still going to be part of the reference and part of what has already been received before coming to this meeting.

The revised recommendation was read:

The programme committee recommends that the central committee:

1. Refer the document to the executive committee for further improvement and further processing leading up to the next central committee.
2. Requests the executive committee to take up religion and violence, non-violence and peace building as an important subject for the development of the Council's work in the coming years.

The recommendations were approved by consensus.

GEN PRO 08 Principles for Child Friendly Churches

Dr Watkins read the recommendation from the programme committee:

The programme committee recommends to the central committee to receive the document on Principles for Child-friendly Churches and refer it to the reference group for further elaboration and further work in combining the documents of theology and principles for a child-friendly church. This work should include further work on the theological reflections on this issue, bearing in mind the comments noted, and present it to the next executive committee.

She clarified that the "documents of theology" referred to include, among others, the letter from the general secretary, as part of a longer document.

Mrs Margarita Nelyubova (Russian Orthodox Church [Moscow Patriarchate]) said that the document needs further, careful elaboration, not only including the letter of the general secretary. It is unsatisfactory as it is now.

Metropolitan Serafim referred to the humanitarian summit in Istanbul, where there was a resolution on a special fund to protect the rights of children. It is important to support this initiative. In any conflict and problem of poverty the victims are the children.

The general secretary suggested adding in the third line, after “child-friendly church”, “including further work”.

Mrs Margarita Nelyubova remarked that her comment was not only about the need for further reflection, but about the essence or the principles of the document, and further elaboration on that. This was also raised in the programme committee. We should also consider the title itself, since it would impossible to think of any “child-unfriendly churches”.

The recommendation was approved by consensus.

GEN PRO 09 REV Churches Recommit to Accelerate HIV Response

The revision of the document was read.

The revised document was approved by consensus.

GEN PRO 10 Review of the reports of the commissions

The reports were received by consensus.

GEN PRO 11 Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace Reference Group

Dr Enns, moderator of the PJP reference group, read the amendments to the document.

Dr Quawas asked why recommendation 17 b), which otherwise is a nice recommendation, suggests a gathering of pilgrim teams at the pre-assembly, rather than the assembly itself. Dr Enns explained that the idea was the possibility of a having pre-assembly. To mention the assembly itself is fine, but there should be some form of gathering or harvesting before the assembly.

Rev. Anne Heitmann (Evangelical Church in Germany) remarked that almost all recommendations refer to the reference group and the theological study group. She therefore suggested adding something to recommendation 12, where the Christian world communions should be consulted, that also uniting and united churches should be involved, because they have an important contribution to make on unity.

The general secretary explained that it is not meant as document for the general audience, but since this document is to be shared widely, one could consider having two different recommendations.

Rev. Dr Hyunju Bae (Presbyterian Church of Korea) said that member churches in Korea proposed to WCC some time ago, that Korea should be part of the pilgrimage. One Korea was divided into two Koreas 70 years ago. WCC should continue a pilgrimage process in Korea. She therefore suggested that the central committee should receive an invitation to hold a Pilgrimage for Justice and Peace in Korea and the North East Asia in 2018, and refer it to the PJP reference group for consideration and discussion.

Dr Watkins, moderator of the programme committee, suggested that this would be a good note rather than a recommendation.

The Very Rev. Ray Coster (Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand) recalled the discussion on full unification of Korea while in Busan. He said that it is important that as a central committee we continue to stand in solidarity with Korea. He thanked staff for their continued work in the region. North East Asia is under threat of nuclear war, it is important to do all we can in order to prevent that and that we stand with our Korean sisters and brothers.

It was approved to add to the notes that the central committee received word of an invitation to participate in a pilgrimage for Korea and North East Asia in 2018.

Dr Enns reported that there was some frustration about the methodology of the programme committee. We are here to do programme work, not to keep up with the institution. We are noting the financial constraints, but spend too much time editing reports, which is not the task of the programme committee. The task is to make priorities. What is the mission of WCC? Where are we going with the churches? Instead we are stuck with large number of documents. It would be important to develop a methodology that helps the programme committee make priorities in the preparation for the next central committee meeting.

Ms Auken (Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark) agreed with Dr Enns. She asked that the proposal also goes for the central committee meeting as a whole. An annotated agenda would be helpful as a first step, but the aim is to be productive instead of consuming papers.

Dr Angelique Walker-Smith noted that in the communications committee report there are similar recommendations.

The additional recommendation 17 was approved by consensus.

The revised Doc. No. GEN PRO 11 was approved by consensus.

The central committee approved by consensus the documents reported by the programme committee.

10. Communications

10.1. The WCC Communication Strategy

On 23 June, in a hearing session, invited by H.E. Prof. Dr Metropolitan Gennadios of Sassima, Ms Miriam Weibye (Church of Scotland), moderator of the communications committee, introduced the document **GEN COM 2 WCC Communication Strategy**. She lifted up the Seven Weeks for Water as an example of communication work, where the member churches look forward to receiving material every year. However, this year it generated much more interest. In 2016 the Ecumenical Water Network adopted the WCCs´ pilgrimage of justice and peace. As a result we went on a pilgrimage of water in the Middle East, with a special focus on Palestine. The fellowship of the churches on the ground participated and contributed to the success of the campaign, strategizing on how to make the campaign more effective. The campaign has always been a virtual one, however, this time it was done differently, by launching it in a particular context. Highlighting communication work during the campaign helped deal effectively with arising controversy during the campaign. This shows how communication underpins all work of the WCC. The WCC 10th Assembly recommended that such communication be inspiring. Therefore, a new communication strategy of the WCC will focus on:

1. Fellowship
2. Advocacy – being a prophetic voice
3. Capacity building

To give an executive summary of the report, it is the living fellowship of churches that is the subject, focus and actor in WCC communication strategy. WCC communication itself is an instrument and a catalyst for change. Key objectives of the communication strategy include clear, consistent and timely communication. Implementing this vision entails strong use of digital media, and the communication organization must be seen as part of the management's tool kit for mission development as well as for administration.

Rev. Everdith Landrau (Presbyterian Church [USA]) commended the communication team for their work, and reminded the team that between the need for social media, which we have all kinds of, it is also important to include forms of communication that have been regarded as grass-root communication, face to face communication, and oral communication in the midst of technological movements. When

receiving as much digital information as we do, we do not always pay attention. As well as being enthusiastic and thankful for the strategy, we should remember that there are millions of people who are not even connected. We need to reach communities in grass-root ways.

Rev. Dr Cornelia Füllkrug-Weitzel (Evangelical Church in Germany) congratulated the team on the strategy. She then warned against potential dangers of professional communications, such as the very critical and heavy reactions WCC received when the Ecumenical Water Network visited Palestine. The better you get, the more you are attacked. It is very good to make everything available to everyone, but there is also a potential threat connected to that. Do we have a strategy to counteract that?

Rev. Marianne Brekken (Church of Norway) congratulated the team for a good plan. She wished to bring attention to the connection with the document on religion and violence. Young people are going online searching for answers, asking what Christianity is, what is religion, who is God. If we are online, how do we answer these questions? We have Facebook groups in Norway where answers can be found, but they are not good. Radical and hard words between young people can be found, saying that this is the word of God, and nothing can change it. Where are the internet forums where young people can bring questions and discuss?

Dr Ann K. Riggs (Religious Society of Friends: Friends General Conference) said that she missed a clear point on the work of Faith and Order. Theological reflection can be found, but it is not clearly relating to the unity of the church. As WCC is the foremost place in the world for the work on unity, we need a link to the Faith and Order.

Ms Weibye did not respond to all inputs, but said the comments and concerns would be taken to the communications committee.

The central committee received the document by consensus and recommended it to the communications committee.

10.2. Report of the Communications Committee

On 28 June, Dr Agnes Abuom welcomed everyone to a decision session. She invited the moderator of the communications committee, Ms Miriam J. Weibye, to introduce the report entitled: "Transformation and the pilgrimage of Justice and Peace" (*Doc. No. GEN COM 04 Report of the Communications Committee*).

Ms Weibye referred to Ephesians 4:15-16, connecting truth-telling to the overall programmatic work of the WCC, as well as the pilgrimage of justice and peace. Language tools and capacity building are essential to communicating the pilgrimage. In this view the communications strategy may better be understood as a framework. The communications committee proposed the following recommendations for the central committee:

a) Adopt the communications framework (GEN COM 02 rev) as the basis for the development of a communication strategy.

b) Encourage WCC bodies and staff to work with the member churches to identify key people within our structures who can assist within the communication framework and strategy; and provide training and support.

c) Request the executive committee to work with all units to create an assessment tool to determine outcomes and impact that inform stories of transformation that demonstrate accountability/ transparency and enable effective and difference making storytelling. Such storytelling can convey our travel on the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace.

d) Request executive committee and staff to develop a more user-friendly format of governance documents that includes an executive summary, and should be received no less than three months in advance of the meeting.

e) Request the integration of new central committee members and encouragement of the fellowship may be furthered in building on initiatives such as the buddy mentoring programme.

The recommendations were approved by consensus.

11. Finances

11.1. Documents to be referred to the Finance Policy Committee

On 23 June, in a hearing session, Ms Elaine Dykes, WCC Director of Finance, invited by Bishop Dr Mary Ann Swenson, and on behalf of Rev. Dr Paul Gardner (Moravian Church in Jamaica), vice-moderator of the finance policy committee, presented the documents GEN FIN 01-06.

The finance policy committee would review progress with the WCC financial strategy 2014-2017, as summarised in GEN FIN 03. The report showed that certain outcome indicators had been met during 2014-2015; for example, the general reserve target had been achieved. There had been challenges in meeting certain other targets; the level of programme contributions had been adversely impacted by the exchange rate policy implemented by the Swiss national bank. In original currency, however, contributions had remained remarkably stable. A detailed review of the income development strategy could also be found in the document GEN FIN 03.

The finance policy committee would also consider document GEN FIN 06 *Report on progress with the new membership contributions plan*. In 2015, 56% of member churches contributed, with a significant number having increased their contribution by at least 2%. The result of this positive response would be reviewed by the finance policy committee. A first draft of *Financial scenarios for 2018-2021*, set out in GEN FIN 05, would be presented for discussion. The scenarios present financial profiles and income development targets. The finance policy committee would be invited to consider ways in which the financing of the project work might be strengthened by secondments; and to take account of the impact of fixed and variable costs in defining the financial models. Ms Dykes referred to the current work in the preparatory phases of the real estate development project, Green Village. The steering committee for the project would meet during central committee, and the report would be made available for the central committee.

The central committee received the financial reports by consensus and referred them to the finance policy committee.

Former WCC general secretary, Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia, led the central committee in prayer.

11.2. Report of the Finance Policy Committee

On 28 June, in a decision session, Dr Agnes Abuom invited Rev. Dr Paul Gardner to present the report of the finance policy committee *(*GEN FIN 07 *Report of the Finance Policy Committee).* He read the mandate of the committee before reading the suggested recommendations to the following areas:

1. Reflections from the moderator's address and the report of the general secretary
2. Report on actions taken on recommendations from the finance policy committee in July 2014
3. Significant issues from the finance sub-committee meetings, 2014-2015
4. Report of the audit committee
5. Report on progress with the Financial Strategy 2014-2017
6. Financial scenarios 2018-2021

7. Report on progress with the new membership contributions plan
8. Report of the steering committee for the real estate development project

Together with Rev. Marianne Brekken (Church of Norway), Dr Gardner introduced the recommendations, and the floor was opened for discussion, point by point.

1. Reflections from the moderator's address and the report of the general secretary

The finance policy committee **recommends** that central committee **encourage:**

a) the model of justice solidarity visits, as a means of witness, and of meaningful engagement with important issues of justice and peace;

b) continued focus on advocacy, and the work of communication;

c) the development of ways of encouraging that work on certain themes be conducted by member churches, who would undertake to give an account of progress as part of their contribution to the fellowship;

d) continued active cooperation with the UN agencies, to ensure that the moral authority of the churches is heard;

and that central committee **require** that executive committee report on progress with these areas of work at the next meeting.

Rev. Prof Dr Fernando Enns recommended that at some point the report of the finance policy committee be synchronised with the report of the programme committee.

The recommendations were approved by consensus.

2. Report on actions taken on recommendations from the finance policy committee in July 2014

The finance policy committee **recommends** that central committee **require** that executive committee re-examine the decision to form a fund-raising advisory group, and determine whether such a group should be formed, or not.

The recommendation was approved by consensus.

3. Significant issues from the finance sub-committee meetings, 2014-2015.

The finance policy committee **recommends** that central committee **support** the decision of executive committee in November 2014 that "alternative plans be developed in advance to ensure that the next central committee held in Geneva be managed within a budget of CHF 500,000".

Mr Thomas Hyeono Kang (Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil) commented that he was not opposed to the limit of CHF 500 000 , and that should be responsible in terms of policy, but he drew attention to possible cross-cutting issues. He considered that the stewards' programme was fantastic, and that we should take that into account. H.E. Metropolitan Serafim Kykotis (Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa) gave special thanks to the Church of Norway and the Ministry of Culture, as well as to the general secretary, for the current central committee meeting, as it is an example of how we are going to work in the future.

The general secretary said that there would be an opportunity to show gratitude later, but clarified for the records that the City of Trondheim offered the reception, and the county of Trondheim offered the St John's Eve excursion and meal.

The recommendation was approved by consensus.

4. Report of the audit committee.

The finance policy committee **recommends** that central committee **encourage** the general secretary to contact member churches and the ecumenical partners, requesting their proposals for professional members for the audit committee, for consideration and appointment by executive committee.

The recommendation was approved by consensus.

5. Report on progress with the Financial Strategy 2014-2017.

The report was tabled for information.

6. Financial scenarios 2018-2021

The finance policy committee **recommends** that central committee:

a) **adopt** a steady financial scenario for the strategy for 2018-2021, with total programme income at CHF 18.5 million, subject to any adaptation required in 2017;

b) **support** the approach of maintaining programme staff costs at the same level as budget 2016 throughout the next four-year period, subject to adjustment between staff categories, in the interest of maintaining executive staff competence and capacity;

c) **support** the initiative to develop new models of secondment, including the assignment of staff employed by a member church to a WCC project (for example on a part-time basis, and while resident in their home country), whether funded by the member church in full, or covered in part by WCC;

d) **require** that the financial strategy for 2018-2021 integrate the financial plan for the assembly, and the financial plan for the building project; and

e) **require** that the financial strategy for 2018-2021 be further developed, with outcome indicators, and be subject to review by executive committee at its next meetings, so that it may be brought forward for approval at central committee in 2018.

The recommendations were approved by consensus.

7. Report on progress with the new membership contributions plan

The finance policy committee **recommends** that central committee **encourage** its members:

a) to ensure that their church makes an annual contribution as a responsibility of membership and as an expression of solidarity; and

b) to strengthen their engagement with churches in their home country, region and church families to increase the number of contributing member churches.

Mrs Anne Glynn-Mackoul (Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East) confirmed that she would personally commit herself to these recommendations. She expressed her special gratitude to the Evangelical Church in Germany for its contribution, not only in numbers but also proportionally. She also expressed gratitude for the church's gracious contributions with regard to receiving Syrian refugees; and for the contribution of the Bishop Dr Martin H. Hein in service for the WCC.

The recommendations were approved by consensus.

8. Report of the steering committee for the real estate development project

As required by executive committee in November 2015, the finance policy committee received a report from the steering committee for the real estate development project, in order that it might assess progress towards the long-term financial goals. The finance policy committee received the report for information, and concurred with the general direction of the work of the steering committee.

11.3. Real Estate development project: a recommendation on sale or long-term lease transactions related to land and buildings

On 28 June, during a decision session, the general secretary introduced a proposal on how decisions should be taken, and who should sign, in the case of sale or long-term lease of land. The proposal was that the steering committee should recommend sales, while the moderator or one of the vice-moderators, in addition to the general secretary, should sign any appropriate document.

Dr Quawas suggested that this be done at the level of the executive committee, not only at the level of the leadership of the central committee. He agreed with the suggested signatories, but in his view, the recommendation for specific transactions should be approved by the executive committee.

Mr Kang said he concurred with the recommendation, but needed clarification on the parameters involved with regard to the disposition of property. If there were to be property transactions, he requested that more information be shared.

The general secretary explained that the building project had been a subject of constant reporting to the executive committee since 2012. To this meeting, a substantial report was included as an appendix to the general secretary's report. It was a reality that some part of the Grand-Saconnex would require being sold or leased. The strategy would have to be decided with reference to the financial plans and opportunities for the project. It remained important that the project be monitored by the central committee as well as by the executive committee. The general secretary assured members that they would be kept informed of developments. Clarity was also required on the process necessary so that timely action could be taken when required.

The discussion on the proposed recommendation was opened.

Rev. Silishebo Silishebo inquired about the value of the building in terms of selling it in a long-term and a short-term perspective. The general secretary explained that on a regular basis we invite experts to assess the value of the project independently.

Dr Quawas recommended that the first paragraph of the recommendation be amended to read: "…development project and *the decision of the executive committee*". Ms Glynn-Mackoul suggested a slight adjustment in agreement with Dr Quawas, that the central committee decide that the joint signing authority should be the general secretary plus two additional signatures from the moderator and one of the vice-moderators. Bishop Dr Chibuzo R. Opoko (Methodist Church Nigeria) expressed his agreement. Dr Quawas suggested that in order to address any circumstance in which the moderator were not available, the recommendation could refer to two additional signatures from any two of the moderator and vice-moderators.

The general secretary remarked that the central committee was now considering the introduction of a principle of needing three signatures, instead of two, but that the intention was that this requirement would extend only to sales. Ms Glynn-Mackoul said that it was not clear that the three signatures would be required only for sales.

Rev. Dr Angelique Walker-Smith asked the finance policy committee for an explanation of the difference between transactions related to land and buildings.

Bishop Dr Opoko said that in the discussions yesterday it was specifically requested that the issue concerned sales and long term lease of land, with the aim of finding a way of avoiding delaying the process.

The general secretary said that the recommendation had to be seen as one, and that it would be impossible to make the signature without having a decision process beforehand. Mr Kang said he was mindful of what the general secretary had just said, but that it was important that the two paragraphs

be consistent. The general secretary said that the paragraphs now covered all that was relevant in this case.

The recommendation would now read:

> The central committee **delegates** to the leadership of central committee the authority to decide upon sales and long term leases of land or buildings, based on the recommendations of the WCC steering committee for the real estate development project and the decision of the executive committee.
>
> > In accordance with Rule XVIII *Legal provisions*, point 4, joint signature is required to legally bind the organisation, those with such joint signing authority being listed formally at the Register of Commerce, Geneva, their authority having been granted in accordance with that same Rule.
>
> For sales and long term lease transactions related to land and buildings, the central committee **decides** that the joint signing authority be the general secretary, plus two additional signatures from the moderator and the vice moderators.

The recommendation was approved by consensus.

12. Institutional matters

On 23 June, H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima moderated a hearing session.

12.1. Documents to be referred to the Policy Reference Committee

GEN 07 Report of the Permanent Committee on Consensus and Collaboration

Bishop Simo Peura (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland), moderator of the Permanent Committee on Consensus and Collaboration, introduced and explained the recommendations of the report.

The committee recommends that:

a) a brief introduction to the special commission be presented to the central committee,

b) the staff serving as consensus facilitator be invited to the meetings of the commissions and other consultative bodies,

c) the executive committee use all possible means to encourage member churches to undertake reviews and response to the text "The Church towards a Common Vision", before the end of 2016.", he said that the recommendation also deals with membership applications. However, the ecumenical commitment of the applying churches has to be observed; and

d) the application process proceed to the next phase, namely a visit to the applicant church (taking note that, by now, these visits have already taken place).

Dr Andrej Jeftic (Serbian Orthodox Church) asked about the Baptist Communion in Congo, and whether the church has been informed about the possibility of becoming a member as a group of Baptist churches in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Metropolitan Gennadios then responded to questions. Baptist churches come from different historical streams and backgrounds. It is therefore a matter of identity whether they are able to come together or not. This special case must be respected, although the committee normally encourages joint applications.

Ms Teny Pirri-Simonian (Armenian Apostolic Church [Holy See of Cilicia]) said that we have to commend and implement the consensus decision-making process. If and when possible dialogue should continue. After all these years with the consensus decision-making process, do we know how many decisions have

been made, and how many have been suspended because dialogue was not possible? Bishop Simo Peura answered that he could not recall any issue which had been suspended in the consensus history of WCC.

Metropolitan Gennadios thanked Bishop Simo Peura for the report and the hospitality of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, who hosted the last meeting of the committee. He reminded the central committee that this is the only committee that functions also during the assembly. Finally, he reiterated the view of the bishop on the importance of the committee, also on behalf of the Orthodox churches.

Ms Harriet Jane Olson (United Methodist Church/United Methodist Women) remarked that there is a great potential for dialogue between the gender advisory group and the permanent committee to fulfil balances.

Rev. Dr June Totten (American Baptist Churches in the USA) expressed that she was encouraged by the application of the Baptist Union in central Africa.

Rev. Dr Susan Durber, moderator of the Faith and Order Commission, spoke in favour of the recommendation that encourages the churches to respond to the Faith and Order document "The Church". She expressed her hope that the churches will find the document a way of doing ecclesiology which does not perpetuate division into poles, but is really seeking to overcome that polarity.

Metropolitan Gennadios explained that the work of Faith and Order is always part of the work of the permanent committee, and there is close cooperation.

The central committee received the document by consensus and referred it to the policy reference committee.

GEN 05 Membership matters

The general secretary proceeded to introduce four matters for decision, which are to be referred to the policy reference committee:

1. Three churches that have already been accepted as interim member churches (the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa, the Central Africa Synod in Malawi and the Council of Baptist Churches in North East India) and would now be accepted as full members.
2. Two churches (the Africa Brotherhood Church in Kenya and the Community of Baptist Churches in Central Africa, DRC) to be accepted as interim member churches for 24 months.
3. The Canadian Lutheran World Relief to be recognized as a specialized ministry in working relationships with the WCC.
4. The Kimbanguist church.

Rev. Kristi (Gereja Gereja Kristen Jawa [GKJ]) asked about the meaning of "tribalism" in this report, referring to "eradication of tribalism". The general secretary suggested that the question be sent to the policy reference committee.

Dr Quawas inquired about a missing point in the recommendation of the executive committee, namely that the executive committee asked that the matter of the Kimbanguist Church be discussed during the central committee meeting and that representatives of African member churches be invited to offer advice. He also underlined that suspension does not mean that the church loses its membership.

Bishop Opoko (Methodist Church Nigeria) also confirmed that, indeed, representatives of African member churches were asked to look into the matter during the regional meeting. He observed that the matter has been pending for fifteen years. The church in question has been a WCC member for many years, however, new leaders came and the church split into two churches. One group thinks Kimbangu is God, and the other group says no to this. If we go for suspension of the church, we risk

throwing out the good people. The approach should be to have further negotiations with the church, to see if we can find common ground.

The general secretary said that the matter is probably well known, and a report shows what has been done to follow up the matter. The new rule since the last assembly is that it is possible to suspend a church. This is not the same as exclusion. The proposal is that we come with a revised proposal at this meeting, but it is important that it is first discussed in the policy reference committee, and among representatives of the African member churches and the All Africa Conference of Churches, present in this meeting.

The central committee received the report by consensus and referred the membership matters to the policy reference committee.

GEN PRC 02 On the way to the 11th Assembly

The general secretary introduced the document on the 11th Assembly, and the launching of the process of selecting the venue. The general secretary had invited member churches to indicate their willingness to host the assembly. Though this was not part of the formal process, a letter from the Church of England was received, with the city of Liverpool as a proposed site, and the Evangelical Church in Germany announced their readiness to host the next assembly. Now the process has to start officially, after this meeting of the central committee. The action needed by the central committee at this meeting is to appoint an Assembly Planning Committee and an Assembly Worship Planning Committee.

Archbishop Emeritus Dr Anders Wejryd (Church of Sweden) observed that this, in a way, is a self-moving process. It may be awkward that we do not state that we have challenges with these immense ecumenical gatherings. Having seen the budget, we aim at something large. It is important to remind ourselves that we should rethink these matters. The way assemblies grow does not seem quite thought through. I say all these, although I know the process will go on.

H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Bishoy of Damietta (Coptic Orthodox Church) asked whether the members of the two committees for the assembly planning should be members of the central committee or not.

The general secretary responded saying that the central committee will appoint those who are central committee members to the committees. In addition, there will be members from partner organisations and local hosts, as well as specialists to be appointed later.

Bishop Azariah said that we are at an early stage, but there seems to be a strong possibility that Europe may be the venue. Whatever the decision will be, it is important to note that obtaining visas to Europe for people from Asia and Africa is a major problem. WCC will have to take upon itself a major responsibility.

Rev. Prof. Dr Fernando Enns said that the assembly planning committee should begin its work with an effort to discern what is needed today, so that we just do not jump into matters as usual. We must ask first: what kind of assembly do we need, and what kind of assembly does the world need?

The general secretary, thanking Bishop Azariah for the reminder, said that the visa problems are well known and must be considered. In the process towards the 10th Assembly, there was a committee discerning issues together with ecumenical partners, as raised by Dr Enns. The idea now is that we do not need two committees, but one. By starting its work early, the assembly planning committee can raise fundamental questions about the next assembly, so that we have a well prepared discussion in 2018.

The central committee received the report by consensus and referred it to the policy reference committee.

GEN PRC 04 Policy on Non-Active Member Church Status

The general secretary introduced the document. If member churches that have not made a financial contribution should be declared as non-active, the consequences would be that these churches are not eligible for subsidies or election into governing bodies. Some concerns have been raised because the policy has not been applied consistently. Therefore we have a proposal to review the policy, in order to ensure good financial stewardship, and make sure that the reimbursement policy is working according to its intentions. We therefore ask the policy reference committee to reflect upon this and bring proposals to the central committee for action.

Dr Jeftic reminded the central committee that the reimbursement policy was approved in November 2015, and now we are to affirm it and give it validity. But we must remember that it has been distributed to the member churches who were asked to attach their responses accordingly.

The general secretary added that it is up to the policy reference committee to discuss it, but the clear intention is that reimbursement of travel costs is connected to payment of membership fees.

Rev. Silishebo Silishebo thanked the executive committee for moving on this paper. We live in a real world where mission is dependent on power and money, but there are also churches which have a variety of gifts to share with the body, even if they do not have the money. He expressed his gratitude for the proposal, because we need further reflection on this. He said that he came to the assembly empty-handed, where he was expecting to make a contribution. Psychologically that affects us. How loving, life-embracing it would be to feel that our fellowship and belonging together is not centred on money.

Dr Quawas said that we have to combine both decisions to give an answer: the reimbursement issue and the question of the active membership.

Rev. Cora L. A. Matamoros said that it is worrying to see the situation of the member churches around the world. We are now on a new path. We need to differentiate between churches that do not want to be members because they do not wish to, or because they do not have money, or because they lack information. She therefore asked that the situation of the churches be analysed more in-depth before making a decision.

The general secretary explained that in the analysis of why churches are not registered as active, there is a huge variety. Many churches, not paying membership fee, are in some ways involved in our work. He therefore suggested refering the matter to the policy reference committee to look into.

The Most Rev. Emmanuel J. Udofia (The African Church) said that the amount of money we are paying for WCC membership is not even up to what we are paying to the national council of churches. This means WCC is considerate. Nevertheless, he would still appeal to the central committee to place tender justice with mercy. It is not always so that the churches do not have the money, but he would be pleading on behalf of other churches, who are not able to meet their obligations. If they are seen as not apt, they will be discouraged. We need to make sure they are encouraged to participate.

The central committee received the report by consensus and referred it to the policy reference committee.

GEN PRC 03 Towards the mid-term evaluation and the renewal of the WCC strategic plan

The general secretary introduced the document. After four years the Strategic Plan should be reviewed. We need a process in place to review it, and to facilitate any necessary amendments as a consequence. The mid-term evaluation is a learning process. The central committee is asked to help this process by appointing a Mid-Term Evaluation Team. This has been discussed in the executive committee, including a proposal for how the committee should be composed.

The central committee received the report by consensus and referred it to the Policy Reference Committee.

12.2. Report of the Policy Reference Committee

On June 27, in a decision session, H.E. Metropolitan Gennadios of Sassima, invited Bishop Dr Alex Gehaz Malasusa, moderator of the policy reference committee, to report from the committee. He asked committee members to stand up and gave the word to the rapporteurs, Bishop Dr Isaac Mar Philoxenos and Mrs Anne Glynn-Mackoul, who thanked the staff, Archpriest Dr Daniel Buda and Rev. Dr Martin Robra. She pointed to some minor changes and corrections that had been done to the document (**GEN PRC 05 Report of the policy reference committee**) after the document had gone to translation and then read the recommendations by the policy reference committee.

A discussion took place on the point of the Black Lives Matter-movement (recommendation c), and a few minor changes were made.

The recommendation was approved by consensus.

The rapporteur proceeded to the recommendations on the Report of the General Secretary (e, f, g). The need to correct numeration was noted.

The recommendation was approved by consensus.

The rapporteur continued by reading the recommendations on GEN 02.

Dr Quawas asked what was meant by "greater coherence between the two sub-committees". It was explained that a gap was felt by some members, which was due to lack of communication between the committees. Dr Quawas remarked that these are sub-committees of different governing bodies. It would mean that we are minimising the role of the central committee. He proposed to delete the whole paragraph.

It was agreed to delete the last paragraph.

The recommendation was agreed.

GEN 07 Report of permanent committee on consensus and collaboration

Metropolitan Bishoy said he was unable to comply to leave seats vacant. His proposal, which had also been heard in the meeting of the governance and nominations committee, would be to give churches clear instructions in the invitation to meetings, that they should follow the percentage which is needed for the representation. Leaving seats vacant is something new, which we should not rush. This change of rule should also go to the assembly.

The rapporteur suggested forwarding the issue to the permanent committee, in order to avoid having the discussion here. The policy reference committee affirms that the issue goes forward to the permanent committee for consideration.

The recommendation was agreed.

GEN 05 Membership matters

The recommendations were presented for approval. Metropolitan Gennadios declared that welcoming back the Dutch Reformed Church into the WCC fellowship was a historic moment for the churches.

Prof. Dr Mary Anne Plaatjies Van Huffel (Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa) WCC President for Africa, said that the re-admittance of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa will certainly be something to celebrate in South Africa. In Africa it means a lot to celebrate a homecoming. The welcome back in the *oikoumene* also means that we look forward to discern the path forward in the proximity with our Dutch Reformed brothers and sisters. In the words of our moderator, Dr Agnes Abuom, we say:

let us walk together. And what does the Lord require from us? To act just, love mercy and live humbly with our Lord.

Dr Enns said that it is a real joy to have the church back in the ecumenical family. However, some of us are aware of the discussions within the church. This is about holding each other accountable. Even if apartheid came to an end, racism is still present, also within the church. There are questions we have to discuss with them. Why was it impossible to adopt the Belhar confession which was so important in South Africa?

Rev. Cornelis Janse van Rensburg (Dutch Reformed Church) explained that he had been the facilitator of the Dutch Reformed Church, having been with them for a few years. He said that the process has gone far, not to the extent they had wished, but still it has moved forward. The leadership has played a significant role in making the talk go further in spite of parts of their community. This is not without challenges, but most important is that they are trying their best. As somebody that has stood beside them, he supported them enthusiastically.

By acclamation, the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa was re-admitted as a full WCC member church;

Dutch Reformed Church (DRC)

Representatives of the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC), Rev. Dr Gustav Claassen and Rev. Cornelis Janse van Rensburg, gave greetings to the central committee. It has been 55 years since the church left and they were tough years. You will understand that this moment is of great significance to us. I want to acknowledge this moment of great joy. To our supporters a great thank you for journeying with us, recommending us and for all they did personally. A number of persons and representatives were thanked for their help and support. These friends impressed us in our darkest hour of shame, in an unprecedented testimony of true Christian forgiveness, especially the associate general secretary, Prof. Dr Isabel Phiri, and Archpriest Dr Daniel Buda, and the policy reference committee. Staff made extensive contributions in a kind way. The Dutch Reformed Church was part of the WCC from its inception, and was present in 1948 also when the then World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WCRC) met for the first time.

But the DRC missed the enormous Kairos moment in 1960. Although many were critical of the police actions, the DRC eventually listened to the politicians and those masterminding the politics of Apartheid. For years we moved aside from the ecumenical bodies. Slowly, churches in South Africa and ecumenical organisations became so convincing that we came to understand that every human being, regardless of race, gender, or anything, is made in the image of God, and therefore enjoys human dignity. We confessed our sins to God and to all of South Africa. We suffered from theological assumptions. We confessed in public at regional and national synods. We invited Archbishop Desmond Tutu, even former president Nelson Mandela, and confessed our fallacy. We believe we are to be given grace far beyond human comprehension. We also know that no amount of words can obliterate the pain and suffering of those who are the victims of our mistakes. We still have to address the inequalities and injustices of our society. There is some sense of superiority that still exists. DRC in South Africa is engaged in the season of human dignity. And may I say the season of human dignity was born of deep discussion for two reasons of the confession of God. We embraced it and through reading we discerned that the confession is about human dignity.

We would not be at this point if it was not for the leadership of WCC and the churches in South Africa. The programme to combat racism must be acknowledged. And to that I have to testify today. The WCC never let go of us. While we closed the doors, you never did. After our conversion you continued to guide us. WCC took us back into the ecumenical fellowship without shaming us, and received us with love and forgiveness that can only be ascribed to true discipleship of Jesus Christ. If there is one church

that knows what it means to suffer from isolation, it is the DRC. We know what it is to be isolated and we have come a long way. Today we know that the truth is unity, and in the embodiment of the love of Jesus Christ for every human being. Our lord Jesus and his liberating love, may the grace of God and love of Jesus Christ and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all.

By acclamation, the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian Blantyre Synod was admitted as a full WCC member church;

Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) Blyntyre Synod

Rev. Alex Benson Maulana, general secretary of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) Blantyre Synod addressed the central committee. Dictionaries have failed me to explain the debt of my extreme gratitude. The church will celebrate – a celebration so splendid. The membership in WCC is so tremendous. It fulfils the long desire of belonging. A sense of belonging is the best human need and we feel it strongly. Belonging makes us connected. Moderator, I would also inform that the Synod exists in a society that treasures a communal life. I am not without you, and you are not without me. This leads to meaningful action, mutual learning and sharing. With all churches in the global council we will bring about recognition of the importance of interfaith dialogue as strengthening relationships is a particular task of the ecumenical movement. Our church also fills the membership with the capacity and willingness to achieve the vision and the mission. Our mission is to claim the gospel for the salvation of humankind. By being accepted into this family, the church has added voice to the voiceless in Malawi and beyond. It will not be the only church speaking, but rather the global church speaking. We will be involved in influencing the government in Malawi and share similar interests and passion in the pursuit of justice and peace, and proclaim justice and peace through Jesus Christ. We would like to inform you that Mozambique suffered civil war from 1996 to 2004, and now it is starting again. There is an urgent need for food and help. The synod kindly asks you to help address this problem. Also, a region has been badly affected by bad weather, causing hunger, and we need your prayers. Thank you for admitting us to this fellowship.

By acclamation, the Council of Baptist Churches in Northeast India was admitted as a full WCC member church.

Council of Baptist Churches in North East India

Rev. Dr Solomon Rongpi, general secretary of the Council of Baptist Churches in North East India, thanked the moderator for the time given to share something about his church. The church is member of a community of churches, of which my church is the biggest. It is unique because of the many groups and Indigenous Peoples who are members of these churches. On behalf of the council, which includes six regional conventions, four associate members and a hundred Baptist conventions, bringing together more than one million Baptist members, I bring greetings to the leadership and members of the central committee as well as to official delegates from all over the world who are present here. We are honoured to be invited, and for the acceptance into the council. The Baptists in North East India have existed for the last 100 years and are the product of North American Baptists who began their mission in 1836. It has been effective for transforming our societies, coming to believe in Jesus Christ, experiencing life in its fullness, and being agents of peace and justice. A number of institutions are being run. Mission and evangelism departments are engaged in holistic ministries, student ministries, health institutions, property departments, and a new undertaking; the North East Christian University started to inculcate Christian values in a secular governed area. We work to form societies to education, healing ministry, theological education and spiritual growth, sharing in the common vision that WCC has. We ensure you that we will be committed to ecumenism. Thanks to Archpriest Dr Daniel Buda, the policy reference committee, the executive committee and the central committee for accepting us as a WCC member and inviting me to be present at this historic moment. We hope to contribute fully, as we continue to celebrate life and oneness in Christ. Thank you.

H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr. Gennadios of Sassima thanked the representatives and welcomed them into the fellowship.

The rapporteur reported than on the recommendations to accept as interim member churches the Africa Brotherhood Church (ABC), Kenya and the Community of Baptist Churches in Central Africa (DRC).

The central committee decided by consensus to admit the two churches to interim membership.

The rapporteur reported on the recommendation to give admission to the Canadian Lutheran World Relief as specialized ministry in working relationships with the WCC.

The Canadian Lutheran World Relief was accepted by consensus as a specialized ministry in working relationships with the WCC.

The rapporteur read paragraph 24, p 7, on the Kimbanguist church, and then proceeded to read the recommendation.

The recommendation was approved by consensus.

GEN PRC 03 Towards the mid-term evaluation and renewal of WCC strategic plan

The rapporteur read the recommendation.

The recommendation was approved by consensus.

GEN PRO 02 On the way to the WCC 11th assembly: The rapporteur read the recommendation. It was suggested to have a report by November 1st, 2016.

The recommendation was approved by consensus.

GEN PRO 04: Policy on Non-active member churches: The rapporteur read the recommendation.

The recommendation was approved by consensus.

12.3. Matters to be referred to the Governance and Nominations Committee

Bishop Dr Mary Ann Swenson moderated the hearing session and asked the general secretary to present the documents.

GEN NOM 02 Nominations

The general secretary proceeded to introduce the document with two appendices, about the mid-term election of the executive committee and proposals from the executive committee for nominations. He gave an explanation of the mid-term changes, and introduced the proposal for replacement of central committee members. He then went on to clarify rules and procedures for the mid-term election as prepared by the executive committee, still being aware that the final decision would have to be taken by the central committee. An email address was made available in the document, so that regional meetings, other meetings and individual members of the central committee could send in their proposals. There will be a hearing session, where the work of the governance and nominations committee will be presented before the decision is made in a closed session.

The general secretary then introduced the proposed nominations for the Assembly Planning Committee and the Assembly Worship Planning Committee. Proposals for names should not come up in plenary but be sent to the governance and nominations committee. He then opened the floor for comments.

Ms Totten said that a conversation needs to take place in plenary, not only in committees. Racism has been brought to our attention. She explained that there is, for instance, a way of seeing the US as part of the NATO and as an Anglo-fellowship. This often times overlooks African Americans. There are member groups who make nominations on a regular basis and never receive appointments.

Ms Emily Evans (Uniting Church in Australia) said that it had taken her 24 hours to reach Norway. She is a member of the central committee, ECHOS, as well as the gender advisory group. She is not an employee in her church, and this will not be an option the coming years. She reminded however that we need to look at what the understanding of our commitment is, and what does it mean to be included. The names on the proposed list of the executive committee are names of people who have many other commitments. Consideration needs to be kept in mind about these demands, especially about young and lay people, who often feel the need to resign.

Rev. Silishebo Silishebo said that uniting and united churches represent an expression of the unity we have been praying for. He hoped that there is something theologically important in this fact, and expressed his wish that the central committee finds a way to place these churches at some level where they feel appreciated, valued and given space to express and share in meaningful way what they have been representing as uniting and united churches. Secondly, he begged for space to raise an issue related to the general secretary. He is aware that the term of the general secretary expires at the end of 2019, while the next central committee meeting will take place in 2018. He therefore wondered whether thoughts have been given to form a search committee.

Rt. Rev. Dhiloraj R. Canagasabey (Church of Ceylon) strongly believed that the new general secretary ought to be in place by the first part of the year 2020. Sometimes we feel it best to have an interim arrangement, and to respect the term of the current general secretary. But there should be a difference between how a state runs and how a church runs. The planning for the years 2020-2021 needs to begin.

Bishop Swenson thanked for the comments, and strongly affirmed that they would be referred to the nominations and governance committee.

The central committee received the reports by consensus and referred them to the governance and nominations committee.

GEN NOM 03 By-laws of consultative bodies, and the Commission of Education and Ecumenical Formation (EEF)

The general secretary said the by-laws have been agreed upon, but need a formal decision.

Dr Quawas raised an issue about rules 6, 6 c), where it says that no member shall serve more than 2 terms in the central committee. He asked whether this means two subsequent terms, and wished to add this question for the governance and nominations Committee to clarify.

Ms Glynn-Mackoul explained that though there has been a discussion on this matter consensus was not reached and therefore the issue would be open for reconsideration.

The central committee received the report by consensus and referred it to the governance and nominations committee

12.4. 1st reading of Governance and Nominations Committee report

On 25 June, in a hearing session, Dr Agnes Abuom invited the moderator of the governance and nominations committee, Archbishop Emeritus Dr Anders Wejryd to report from the committee.

Nominations for the executive committee

Dr Wejryd started by reporting on the nominations of the executive committee. The quotas of youth and lay people are still pending, as well as nominations from Africa, and the committee has dealt with some concerns raised. The proposal as it now stands is the same as the one the central committee has already received. The first five names are not to be re-elected, since they are there for the full period.

Nomination for the Assembly Planning Committee

It was suggested to add Rev. Canon Aida C. Sanchez-Navarro (The Episcopal Church) to the list of nominees.

Nominations for the Assembly Worship Planning Committee

Suggestions for two additional persons were made: Rev. Everdith Landrau (Presbyterian Church [USA]) and Mr Iain McLarty (Church of Scotland), church musician.

Nominations for the Mid-Term Evaluation Team

Two additional persons were suggested: Rev. Daniel Angel Favaro (Evangelical Methodist Church Argentina) and a youth representative.

Dr Abuom reminded the floor that the report was for information and opened for comments. There were no comments and the moderator gave the word to the general secretary.

To use the last time within that session, the general secretary introduced Rev. Dr Sharon Watkins who read the Principles and Tools for Child Friendly Churches.

12.5. Report of the Governance and Nominations Committee

On 27 June, Dr Agnes moderated a decision session. The report was distributed to the central committee members and Dr Wejryd, moderator of the governance and nominations committee, was invited to present the report.

Replacements of central committee members:

a) He reminded the members that it is the task of the central committee to approve replacements of the members of the central committee, and presented the proposal of the governance and nominations committee.

The proposal was approved by consensus.

b) Four vacancies were presented where churches have not yet put forward nominations for replacements. The general secretary clarified that there is no time limit in place for churches to put forward names. However, it is in the interest of the churches and the regions that vacancies will not be too long. He assured the central committee that efforts will be made to have names for replacements as soon as possible.

The recommendation was approved by consensus.

Permanent Committee on Consensus and Collaboration

The Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) was invited to put forward a name to replace Bishop Herman Hein who had resigned.

The proposal was approved by consensus.

Consultative bodies

Recommendations for replacements of members of the following consultative bodies were presented: ECHOS Commission on Youth in the Ecumenical Movement, Commission on Faith and Order, and the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA).

The recommendations were approved by consensus.

Moderator of the programme committee of the central committee

It was recommended that Bishop Petra Bosse-Huber (Evangelical Church in Germany) replace Rev. Dr Sharon Watkins (Christian Church [Disciples of Christ] in the United States) as moderator of the programme committee.

The recommendation was approved by consensus.

Elections of Committees

The moderator of the governance and nominations committee, Archbishop Emeritus Dr Anders Wejryd pointed out a number of factors making it complex to produce proposals that everyone can be satisfied with. He affirmed the importance of finding ways to respect policies on target balances as adopted by the central committee. Still, he explained that the committee had not been able to fully reach target balances on all committees.

He then proceeded to read the proposals for the **Mid-term election of the executive committee**. He asked that any counter-proposal from the floor clarify which member of the executive committee should be replaced. Proposals can only come from members of the central committee.

Bishop Dr Chibuzo R. Opoko (Methodist Church in Nigeria) commended the committee for a job well done. He reminded the plenary that in the last central committee a decision was taken, that the members should rotate after four years. It is therefore necessary not only to inform about the names of those who are proposed, but also to inform about those who are stepping down. Otherwise it will look like a fresh election, and it is not.

H.B. Patriarch Jean Baudouin Kayuwa (Church of Christ – Light of the Holy Spirit) informed the plenary that the Africa region had suggested a name for replacement of Rev. Dr Micheline Kamba, but by surprise, the committee had not taken account of the suggestion.

Rev. Prof. Dr Jerry Pillay (Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa) noted with concern that there is no person from the Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network (EDAN). He expressed the value of their rich contribution to the executive committee and the central committee, who sometimes take things for granted. In the light of actually accommodating people living with disabilities, he asked whether there would be a person willing to step down to give space for an EDAN representative, which is needed.

Rev. Marianne Brekken (Church of Norway) thanked the governance and nominations committee for their work, including their efforts to try to fulfil balances. However, she would have difficulties raising her orange card when the list represents only 10 % lay, 10 % youth and 40 % women. The discussion is coming up again and again, and we say we will be better. But how are we going to be better?

Mr Philip Modayil Mani (Church of South India) remarked that South Asia seems to be totally ignored, and suggested that the list be looked at afresh.

The moderator of the committee, Dr Wejryd, explained that names were communicated from different regions at different times. They have been looked at and balanced. Some names arrived after that, but the committee had by then closed its work. He expressed his regret that the committee did not mark those who are new, and those who are to be re-elected. The committee was asked to replace twelve names, by now eleven names are new. We will have to take into account that it will take till the next assembly to get into this new election system. There are regions which are used to the system of rotation, but who preferred to stick to eight years for the sake of continuation. Archbishop Wejryd then reminded the central committee that the Assembly Planning Committee will be very important for the coming years, and the committee was given the task of looking at the balances of these two committees together.

Dr Agnes Abuom (Anglican Church of Kenya) pointed out that if you look at the entire executive committee, the figure of women represented will go up to 44%.

Ms Emily Evans (Uniting Church in Australia) asked the central committee to keep in mind that her name alone represents three balance groups, and what that truly means for the real balances. Her other concern was that out of the list of twenty names, elevennames are new. It is important that the WCC secretariat helps orient new people into the work of the executive committee.

H.E. Metropolitan Serafim Kykotis (Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa) proposed to introduce a special seat in the executive committee for representatives from EDAN.

Bishop Yona M. Katoneene (Church of Uganda) responded to a question raised about the name of a replacement suggested from Africa region. He explained that members of the executive committee must be English speaking, and that the person who suggested on the list is also from the same region.

Dr Abuom, moderator, said that she hears that the leadership of the WCC needs to address the issue of EDAN. The replacement of Ms Micheline Kamba is difficult, as she brought in a number of constituencies. There is a proposal to consider a special space for people living with disability.

Rev. Prof. Dr Fernando Enns (Mennonite Church in Germany) reminded the central committee of the indicated size of rotation, which would imply a substantial change, so that no more than a quarter of the elected membership should continue.

The moderator of the committee, Dr Wejryd, confirmed that the committee was aware of that and that this concern has been part of the preparations. The rules do not give an exact figure. However, in the supplement to the rules it is recommended that up to three quarters of the membership is changed. The committee did not reach that figure, it reached eleven out of twenty, but we were fully aware of it. He also explained that they were reminded of the domination of English. The committee reacted, but did not change that.

Rev. Dr Henriette Hutabarat-Lebang (Gereja Toraja) said she realized the difficulty of the governance and nominations committee. She wanted to address the question of balances altogether, and whether it meets balances we have had in the past. It would be good to look into the overall participation of the different churches in the different committees to have an overall view of the regional representation.

Bishop Dr Isaac Mar Philoxenos (Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar) said that the executive committee and the central committee should be considered in different ways, which is why the rotation system was introduced. Confessions should be considered and regions should be well represented. No one is represented from South Asia.

Dr Abuom clarified that the rotation system refers to the executive committee. She also said that there must be a way to deal with EDAN, and suggested that the list go back to the committee for further work.

Dr Enns offered to stand aside to include someone from EDAN.

The list was referred back to the committee.

Dr Quawas asked that for the sake of the minutes, it should be pointed out that the new executive committee members resume their responsibilities from 1 January 2018.

With regard to the **Assembly Planning Committee**, Dr Wejryd explained that the group should consist of sixteen central committee members, and proceeded to read the proposal from the governance and nominations committee.

Bishop Dr Martin H. Hein (Evangelical Church in Germany) said he was honoured to be nominated as a member of the Assembly Planning Committee, as he was also a member of the same committee for Porto Alegre. However, this gives him an opportunity to mention that his membership in the central

committee ends with the current meeting for personal reasons. It means that his place in the Assembly Planning Committee becomes free. He used the opportunity to thank everyone for the wonderful years spent together.

Rt Rev. Arnold C. Temple (Methodist Church Sierra Leone) asked whether there were provisions for the hosts in the Assembly Planning Committee.

Metropolitan Serafim suggested authorizing the presidium with the general secretary to find a person from the ecumenical partners, who could be from EDAN.

Dr Wejryd said that he was of the understanding that the Assembly Planning Committee must be seen in connection with the Assembly Worship Planning Committee, where Rev. Miriam Spies has been proposed. He also confirmed that there is an opening for the host country of the next assembly in the Assembly Planning Committee, but at this stage the seat must be kept open.

Dr Quawas suggested that the proposed ten persons from ecumenical partners, should include host country, thereby adding it to the list.

Dr Hutabarat-Lebang spoke to the issue of regional balances. She noted that six names from Europe are more than names from the other regions. For the APC there may be a special reason for it. Dr Agnes Abuom explained that due to the Orthodox contingency, some of the names would come from the Europe region.

Bishop Opoko spoke to confessional and regional balances. In the proposed list for the executive committee, some confessional balances are needed. He asked whether a specific contingency is given for the reformed tradition.

Archbishop Wejryd explained that with regards to the replacement of Bishop Martin Hein, leaves it up to the central committee to suggest someone else, or to appoint the bishop, and have his replacement given by his church.

Dr Abuom clarified that the host country will be included in the ten seats for the partner organisations. With the feedback from the central committee, she asked that the suggested list of names for the mid-term elections of the executive committee and the APC be approved.

The proposed nominations for the Mid-Term Elections of the executive committee and the Assembly Planning Committee were approved by consensus.

Dr Wejryd, moderator of the governance and nominations committee, proceeded to present the proposal for members of the **Assembly Worship Planning Committee**. He explained that there are to be five members of the central committee, which are the only ones to be elected by the central committee. The eight other members will be appointed as experts.

It was suggested to include indigenous persons in the Assembly Worship Planning Committee.

The V. Rev. Dr Jack Khalil (Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East) expressed disappointment that they had not been consulted about this. Orthodox representation includes two Europeans. Archbishop Wejryd explained that the committee has tried to be an integrating force, especially underlining the liturgical and musical competence of the non-central committee members. Knowing the high standards of members of the central committee, the committee was quite sure of their balance and wisdom to be in the worship committee. He then confirmed that there is room for a continued process and consultation on the non-central committee members of the Assembly Worship Planning Committee.

The proposed list of five members from the central committee to the AWPC was approved by consensus.

The V. Rev. Dr Jack Khalil (Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East) asked that his objection regarding the Orthodox representation be recorded.

Dr Wejryd, moderator of the governance and nominations committee, proceeded to present the names proposed for the **Mid-term evaluation team**, which should include three members from the central committee, and three non- central committee members.

Ms Emily Evans (Uniting Church in Australia) referred to the terms of reference and asked the members of the evaluation team to understand the enormity of the task. She inquired about the methodology in the approach, what role the group will have, and how the relationship with the evaluation expert will be. Archbishop Wejryd referred to the consultations between the general secretary and the external evaluation expert. Two members were already members of the governance committee, and the external expert was consulted before the meeting.

The central committee approved by consensus the membership of the Mid-term evaluation team.

Dr Quawas asked that regarding the Assembly Planning Committee, it should be noted in the minutes that the moderator should come from the executive committee, and it should be H.E. Metropolitan Dr Gennadios of Sassima (Ecumenical Patriarchate). The vice-moderator will be elected, but the moderator proposed has been decided.

By-laws of Consultative bodies

Dr Wejryd introduced the proposal to harmonize the by-laws.

The proposal was accepted by consensus.

Search committee for new general secretary

Dr Wejryd explained that the governance and nominations committee had discussed the proposal to appoint a search committee for a new general secretary. The committee had looked into the rules, and found that it is all clearly regulated, and therefore no need to move into the election of a search committee now.

The explanation was accepted.

Amendment to Rule VI.6 d.

Archbishop Wejryd introduced the issue as it was discussed in the governance and nominations committee. The committee found that since there are two more central committee meetings before the next WCC assembly, there will be ample time to bring back the issue.

The report of the governance and nominations committee was approved by consensus.

Dr Abuom thanked Archbishop Wejryd for accepting to step in and moderate the committee.

12.6. Staffing matters (Closed session)

On 27 June, in a closed decision session, Dr Agnes Aboum called upon the general secretary. Envelopes with information concerning staffing matters were distributed. The general secretary introduced the proposed replacements and appointments. Prof Dr Ioan Sauca Romanian Orthodox Church) and Prof Dr Isabel Phiri (Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa) were proposed to be elected as deputy general secretaries.

It was clarified that the appointment of deputies, as with the general secretary, takes place through elections by the central committee.

The central committee accepted the proposal of the general secretary and elected the two deputy general secretaries.

Dr Agnes Abuom thanked the central committee and the governance and nominations committee.

Bishop Dr Mary Ann Swenson led the central committee in prayers.

13. Information sharing in plenary

13.1. Report from the Holy and Great Pan-Orthodox Council

H.E. Metropolitan Dr Gennadios of Sassima moderated the hearing session. He informed the house that the Great and Holy Synod of the Eastern Orthodox Church had just taken place in Crete. This was a great event prepared for many years. It successfully ended with a great celebration the day before. The WCC sent its greetings, received with appreciation. Several Orthodox members of the central committee participated. He then invited H.E. Metropolitan Nifon of Targoviste (Romanian Orthodox Church), who had participated in the event in Crete, to share more information.

Metropolitan Nifon shared news from the Great and Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church. From the Orthodox point of view, such a pan-Orthodox synod had not taken place for almost 1,000 years. 165 bishops, 60 official counsellors and advisers were present. The patriarchates of Moscow, Antioch, Georgia and Bulgaria were not present, but all had participated in the preparation of the Synod. Six themes were prepared over a long period of time, approved by the synaxeis of the primates of all Orthodox churches. All six documents were signed by all participants, as well as the synodal encyclical and the message of the Synod, a total of eight documents. All documents are now put in the site: https://www.holycouncil.org/, and all are invited to read the documents. Metropolitan Nifon then proceeded to present main points from the eight documents;

1. The mission of the church in the contemporary world
2. The Orthodox diaspora
3. The importance of fasting today
4. Autonomy given to local churches in various parts of the world by the mother churches
5. Family, marriage and its impediments
6. The relationship of the Orthodox Church with the Christian world, churches and confessions
7. Synodal encyclical to the Orthodox faithful in the world
8. The final message

The moderator thanked him for the presentation.

13.2. Greetings from the churches in Ukraine

Archpriest Mykolay Danylevytch from the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate) greeted the central committee. He reminded the committee of the war in the eastern part of Ukraine, and underlined that in these difficult conditions, all churches in Ukraine play a role of peacekeepers and unite their forces. However, the supreme council of the country had recently registered a law that constitutes a threat to inter-confessional peace, and a threat to Christian, Muslim and Jewish communities in the country. Two weeks ago the churches hosted a WCC delegation in Ukraine. The delegation led by Mr Peter Prove received detailed information about the situation. We spoke about two draft laws. One law suggests that church communities could move from one confession or jurisdiction to another, thereby also transferring church property. In our situation this will cause confessional conflict. Almost all confessions are worried about this. The second law suggests a change of the status of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. We see a pollicisation of the religious sphere in our country, so we ask WCC to express concern about the situation. A text was presented to the central committee for consideration.

Rev. Prof. Dr. Fernando Enns expressed his concern about the procedures. Dr Abuom suggested that the issues be sent to the public issues committee for further elaboration.

The general secretary shared announcements.

14. Closing actions

H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima moderated the session. On behalf of the leadership of the central committee, he expressed gratitude to the hosts, first of all to Church of Norway and the national host committee, the local committee and the Nidaros Cathedral. He invited to the stage Ms Berit Hagen Agøy, general secretary of the Council on Ecumenical and International Relations; Very Rev. Ragnhild Jepsen, the dean of the cathedral; Ms Gunn Karlsaune, director of the Diocese of Trondheim, and asked the general secretary to offer gifts as a token of WCC´s gratitude. A personal gift was presented to the dean of Nidaros Cathedral.

The director of the diocese in Nidaros, Ms Gunn Karlsaune, spoke on behalf of the national and local committees, giving thanks and expressing how honoured they had been to host the central committee meeting. She said that the work of the central committee has great value for the Church of Norway, and it is important for the church to be reminded that it is part of the universal church. It gives meaning to be part of a large fellowship, because we are bound together as churches. We must never stop working with dialogue and justice, nor stop to feel distressed for those who suffer. She urged all to continue to use the space that the WCC provides. God will lead us to transformation. The pilgrimage of Justice and Peace gives hope, and is making a difference in the world.

She thanked the central committee for giving them the opportunity to host the meeting; it has been a great honour, also for her personally. She told the audience that she grew up in the same area as the WCC general secretary, northwest of Trondheim, where his father had been a priest when she was brought up. She found meaningful that he had come back, not only on his own, but also bringing his friends on the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace. She said that the preparations had been meaningful, fun and an honour, a boost for the city and its pilgrimage tradition. She gave special thanks to staff in Geneva for incredibly good cooperation. She also thanked the general secretary of the Council on Ecumenical and International Relations and her staff, as well as the dean of the cathedral, saying that this meeting has been an inspiration to the daily work in the office of the diocese. These days they had been able to participate in the big issues. It gives energy and hope to feel the fellowship. She also mentioned that when the mayor gives and invitation, it is an honest and sincere invitation. The church has a central role in our society, so we wanted to show the central committee members a little bit more than the hotel, conference and dining areas. They hoped the central committee had enjoyed St. Johns´ Eve, the light summer nights, a little culture and traditional food. She then wished everyone a good and safe journey home, referring to Psalm 118.

Metropolitan Gennadios continued by expressing WCC´s gratitude towards the Minister of Culture, Ms Anne Marie Helleland; to the Norwegian Church Aid, particularly for the grant to EDAN; to the Christian Council of Norway; to local parishes for common prayers; to the mayor of Trondheim and the municipality. He gave thanks to all participants in the central committee for their active role, and for their actions. He also gave thanks to his fellow members of the leadership of the central committee, to the presidents, to central committee members and all other participants for their contributions to worship and Bible studies, moments of prayer, the hearing sessions, and thematic plenaries every morning. He thanked the moderators and vice-moderators of various committees, the general secretary for his commitment to the ecumenical movement and the council. He thanked the adviser on consensus, Ms Tara Tautari; the secretaries and the translators; audio-visual technicians; the general

manager of the hotel; and all the staff, both those in Geneva and those who have been present. Finally he thanked the stewards for their excellent work.

The general secretary continued by thanking the moderator and the two vice-moderators of the central committee for their leadership during and between meetings of the central committee, and their guiding directions. He thanked the minute-taker, Ms Beate Fagerli, colleagues and staff, and the stewards, admiring their hard work. Finally, he gave special thanks to Mr Georges Lemopoulos (Ecumenical Patriarchate), deputy general secretary, and Rev. Dr Hielke Wolters (Protestant Church in the Netherlands), associate general secretary, long-time members of the staff leadership. He also thanked Bishop Dr Martin. H. Hein (Evangelical Church in Germany) for his long service to the Council.

Dr Audeh B. Quawas (Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem) expressed his special gratitude towards the moderator and the vice-moderators of the central committee.

Dr Agnes Abuom, moderator of the central committee, gave thanks for the kind words, and gave thanks to Dr Quawas and the whole of the central committee for their kind words and very active participation. She officially brought the 63rd central committee meeting to an end and reminded the audience that the next central committee meeting will take place 15–21 June, 2018, preceded by the executive committee meeting June 13-14 June 2018, and followed by the meeting of the assembly planning committee, 22–23 June 2018.

The meeting concluded with everyone singing *Laudate omnes gentes*.

APPENDIX I - Moderator's Address

Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace: Discerning the Landscape Together

Dr Agnes R.M. Abuom

1. I greet you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Let us thank God for this opportunity to meet again as the central committee after two years; and let me express my gratitude to you all for prayers and fellowship after the demise of my husband. Our meeting this time is in this historic city of Trondheim, known as the cradle of Catholic, Lutheran and Jewish faith traditions and also for its history, culture, technology and universities. We also meet at a moment in time when churches in many parts of the world, especially in Scandinavia and Europe, are preparing themselves to commemorate the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's Reformation. A significant place and moment indeed to be enriched as we move along in our pilgrimage! I would like to thank the leaders of the Church of Norway and of Trondheim, in particular, for receiving us so warmly and for their generous hospitality.

2. We pray that our deliberations here would inspire, equip and accompany the various constituents of the World Council of Churches which we represent here, to join in the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace and in the process discover afresh our ecumenical vocation in the world today.

***Koinonia* as partnership for justice and peace**

3. While those at the constituting assembly of the WCC in Amsterdam in 1948 said that they commit themselves to "stay together," at the 10th Assembly in Busan in 2013, we told each other that we would "move together," as a movement of churches, living out our hope of God's reign along the way, together and each in our own contexts. Let us hope that during this pilgrimage, our fellowship will find its ultimate purpose through greater expressions of partnership for God's justice, thereby bringing together unity and justice, which at times were pursued separately during these past years. I also see this as a moment of celebration in anticipation that our long cherished goal of the "unity of the Church for the unity of humankind" would soon be a reality in the many and varied expressions of churches, working for the realization of the vision of God's reign in our lives and those of generations to come.

4. One particular point of engagement that we have identified for the work of this session of the central committee is discerning the landscape together. Discernment is about seeking a holistic understanding of a given reality and clarity of purpose in order that we make right decisions accordingly. Let me, therefore, emphasize that this exercise of discernment is to be pro-active in that we do not settle for what is viable and convenient for each of us within our resources, vantage points, institutional considerations and capacities but instead overcome or enhance the same in response to what God is calling us to do as God's witnesses in the world today.

God's justice as our vantage point to discern the landscape

5. The first step, therefore, is to ask: how do we look at the landscape; through what and whose perspective or lenses do we discern? We are aware that we attempt to do so as churches, as institutions, and organizations in different contexts, with distinct theological orientations, geo-political considerations, and cultural preferences. Besides these, we also recognize that much of our patterns of responses have been shaped and continue to be influenced by the legacy of the past – the predominantly western, confessional theological and philosophical tools of analysis and interpretation. While I affirm the strong theological foundation that these provided to the ecumenical movement of the 20th century, I must underline that these were shaped from the vantage points of power and privilege in certain predominantly Christian geo-political contexts.

6. I say this because the reality today is that we live in a much changed, a rapidly changing, and increasingly pluralistic world, and so are realities of Christian presence and witness. Furthermore, just as much as there are manifold challenges to justice and peace, there are also hundreds and thousands of communities, movements, and initiatives striving for the same. In addition, there are also a number of civil society organizations (CSOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academics and public intellectuals imagining and pursing justice and peace, each from their own perspective, with their own tools of interrogation and interpretation. There are those who concentrate their efforts exclusively on certain aspects of justice, such as economic justice, ecological justice, rights and opportunities, etc.; and there are also those who while advocating for one expression of justice ignore other aspirations of justice. For example, I have seen some advocates of economic justice deliberately choosing to ignore the intersections of racism and other forms of discrimination that make injustice more intense in the experience of certain socially disempowered communities. I have also met some gender justice activists who keep the agenda of racial justice out of their purview. There are also those who shout for peace only when their own safety is threatened and while advocating for peace, deliberately ignore the violence inherent in our social and economic structures. We all can cite a number of such instances of pursuits of incomplete concepts of justice and peace. In such a situation of many on the way, what is the distinct resource that we carry with us to share with others; and what is our unique perspective or vantage point as a global community of churches with diverse identities and in many geo-political contexts to pursue justice and peace? And more importantly, what is common about our visions of justice and peace? As a people of the way, on the way, we, churches and church institutions, have a great responsibility.

7. I would like to emphasize that the justice we seek is God's justice, which is different from the many ways it is understood and pursued (Micah 6:8). God's justice is holistic and is radically different from certain pursuits that ignore the inherent or imposed inequalities and consequent dynamics of power in human societies and relationships (Exodus 23:6; Psalms 9:16). As such, it is a biased justice, biased towards the victims, the sinned against – the disempowered and the marginalized, the discriminated and the despised, the abused and the violated, the imprisoned and tortured, the displaced and the impoverished. It holds that as long as some are treated unjustly and denied life, justice is never real and complete. While it heals and restores the dignity of the victim, it also transforms the aggressor (Proverbs 21:15). The reluctance and inability to be just is as dehumanized a condition as being a victim of injustice. God's justice seeks to transform all structures of human relationships and negotiations, by upholding the dignity and sanctity of all that God created and continues to create in wisdom and love, and the interconnectedness of life. It is this dispensation of justice that heralds God's peace, a polity of peace that is different from what the world offers, one that is real and lasting and for all. As such, this vocation of peace with justice is not a mere social engagement but a deeply spiritual one, one that witnesses to the victory of God's justice in the crucified and risen Lord. It is from this vantage point of God's justice, that I ask us to discern the landscape with a view to identifying the signposts of what God wants us to do. Based on this premise of the vantage point of the marginalized and those in struggles for justice, dignity and freedom, I would like to propose a few moral and spiritual challenges for our reflection.

Landscape: The reality of challenges and possibilities

8. First is the reality of the embrace of the market economy and its concomitant culture and values by all nations, communities, families, and people. The creation and accumulation of wealth are pursued as normative since wealth is seen as the ultimate solution for all problems. Greed is unshackled and injustice is institutionalized. With increased accents on economic growth and individual self-fulfilment,

those few with access to wealth and opportunities, while satiating their greed, circulate their own visions of development, exploit and destroy the earth and dehumanize many, the majority of whom are those made vulnerable by social, economic and political structures.

Drought Reverses Zambia's Fortunes

Pherry Mwiinga, a Zambian hydrologist, at the Kariba Dam. Lower electricity output at the facility stems from an El Niño weather pattern that has brought severe drought to parts of Africa .

9. The consequences of this idolatry of mammon are too evident as disasters – natural and human-made – strike, devastating and displacing millions of lives and communities. We are not oblivious to recent horrendous events such as tornadoes, hurricanes, fires, persistent droughts and many other climate changes that occur on a daily basis, all of which have ravaged many communities and are likely to decimate some, especially those nations without resources, technical skills, and clear and adequate solutions as they are not privy to the real causes. But those in the know and are major contributors of climate injustice resist harkening to the cry and voice of reason for change, insisting on continuing negotiation in boardrooms over percentages of carbon emissions. In spite of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which aimed at reducing extreme poverty and hunger by 2015, nothing much has changed, with a small percentage of people owning large portions of wealth and with millions

being pushed into more intense forms of poverty and misery. Furthermore, with supra-national institutions setting the rules, dissent is ruthlessly suppressed and human rights defenders are tortured, killed and forced to disappear in many contexts of the world. Let us hope that the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), whose motto is "that no one will be left out," will make a difference to the 800 million people who still live in extreme poverty and the 90 million children under the age of five and 790 million adults who are malnourished, according to the MDG September 2015 Assessment Report. However, these "17 goals to transform our world" are silent on checking greed and social injustice, which I believe is necessary for any vision of development to be complete.

10. Second is the global phenomenon of the "fear of the other." We live in a pluralistic world, increasingly so with the phenomenal multi-directional movement of people on a daily basis in search of livelihood and of freedom from poverty, violence and war. With increased preoccupation with wealth and resources, further accelerated by the ideology of the market economy, negotiations among communities have turned conflictual, resulting in hostile attitudes toward the other, viewing the other as a predator, as an enemy rather than as a fellow human being in need of space and opportunity to survive. Sadly, there doesn't seem to be a place that is free of xenophobia and the consequential violation of and violence against minorities, migrants and refugees, many of whom are actually victims of war and poverty caused by global economic and military powers and political systems. These attitudes of fear and hatred of the other are stabilizing themselves as ideologies that privilege the majority – whether religious, ethnic or linguistic. What is ironic is that the powerful nations and former colonial powers seem more in this grip of fear. The fear of the powerful is as dangerous as their greed. The images of rejection and mistreatment of millions fleeing from war and violence in recent times are still fresh in our minds. Let us remind ourselves that our faith teaches us to be hospitable and to welcome the stranger, for in so doing, we do it unto our Lord Jesus himself (Matthew 25:25). I would like in this regard to commend the churches in Europe for their sensitive and generous response and for their great witness, even if it meant facing the ire of their governments and the majority.

11. Third are the unsettling tides of secularization on the one hand and the rise of militant religious fanaticism on the other. Both make life miserable for the vulnerable people and the marginalized sectors. While secularization has been helpful in getting out of the hold of redundant and life-stifling obscurantist religious practice for many, it has also, however, created possibilities to nurture attitudes that disregard the sanctity of life and thus perhaps inadvertently lend its hand to the on-going commodification of human life and relationships. Religious fundamentalism, on the other hand, is using religious identities and visions to terrorize, dominate, control and destroy those who do not subject themselves to the power aspirations of its protagonists or subscribe to their visions of the world. Oppressive cultures and practices are brought back to life and reintroduced as icons of nationalism and patriotism. In many contexts, non-state actors are aggressively controlling public behaviour and social relationships with a view to ensuring their continued hegemony.

12. Fourth is the pervasive logic of violence and war as the only viable way to settle disputes, differences and conflicts between and within nations, among communities and people. The realities of violence in many forms and expressions by all human collectives, terrorism and state terrorism, and the shameful reality of some nations manufacturing and selling weapons of mass destruction to boost their economies, points toward yet another sign of moral decadence of our times. For example, roughly 75 per cent of US military aid in the past three years went to Israel and Egypt alone, according to the US Government Foreign Assistance Report. The US arms manufacturers earned over $10 billion in revenue. There are also others, UK, Russia, Israel, China, etc., in the same business, yet also in the forefront of peace negotiations. It should not escape our minds that women and girls remain pawns of any conflict as they bear most of the brunt of violence and war.

13. Fifth is unbridled technological development. Technology has colonized all aspects of our life, offering solutions for everything – needs and necessities as well as our desires and fantasies. Even as

technology presents opportunities for improved living conditions and reduced human suffering, it also leaves us with questions and challenges about its potentialities in an unequal world. In a world that seems to be driven by the logic of the survival of the fittest, we must be aware of the way unbridled technology has caused and continues to cause harm to the earth's eco-system and to many around the world. In other words, what does technological advancement mean to those who are disempowered, marginalized and decimated with the same sophisticated technological development? That is a question that exposes yet another serious moral dilemma.

14. Last and with the largest impact of all of these features are the large-scale marginalization, exclusion and dehumanization of millions of people around the world. These are those who have for centuries been disempowered, discriminated against and kept impoverished by structurally and culturally embedded forms of injustice. Their faces and names are many – the once colonized who continue to be colonized, Indigenous Peoples, people of African descent, stateless people, ethnic and religious minorities, Dalits, people with disabilities, women, children and many others. Unfortunately, some of these communities experience discrimination and exclusion in many of our churches.

15. On a recent visit to the US as part of WCC racial justice solidarity visit, I was shocked to find how racism is still rampant in many aspects of life and how some churches are still divided along those lines. It was brought to our attention as the solidarity team that mass incarceration in the US targets mainly young men of African descent and their imprisonment is to feed the greed of mammon, in this case privately leased prisons that must be filled with prisoners in order for the owners to be paid for their use. The young men are also victims of police violence and killings. Racial injustice is not only a reality and fact in the US; racism is also rearing its ugly head in other parts of the world; and while we have to reiterate our position as WCC that racism is a sin, we must act now. Let me commend the Black Lives Matter Movement (BLM) of young people who have taken it upon themselves to remind us of the sanctity of life and that such killings and mass incarceration must stop. Likewise, I commend the churches and church leaders in the US who have been on the forefront, marching to protest against this heinous act, including mass deportations of individuals that leave families separated. Every life – black, brown, white, red – is as valuable as any other, and every human being is created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26). All lives matter. The issues of racism have not been on the WCC agenda for a while; and I suggest that the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA and WCC organize appropriate consultations and activities to address this wounded history and agree on how to press on to combat racism. As an African, I am also aware that we need to continue and even find appropriate entry points with our brothers and sisters of African descent to discern how we move together in the future after the history of slavery and the 2016 African Union vision of The Africa We Want.

16. Furthermore, trafficking of people for cheap and forced labour, organ harvesting and the sex industry have become commonplace all over the world. According to the Global Slavery Index 2016, about 45 million men, women and children are trapped in modern slavery, with bonded labour, begging and prostitution as the major forms. What then do we say about this generation, our generation that boasts of many achievements of human intellect thriving by subjugating and exploiting millions of vulnerable people? Indeed, a serious moral challenge, a fact that should make us hang our heads in shame!

17. These and similar trends reveal that we belong to a generation that seems to thrive on and boast about its advancement by abusing and exploiting the more vulnerable human beings and the earth. What is disheartening is the total absence of any moral force that holds these powers accountable and a counter-ideology or alternate discourse that provokes our conscience to be nurturers, rather than destroyers, of life.

18. Unfortunately, most faith communities, including Christian, seem either too preoccupied in furthering their own interests of safety and growth, and power and prominence, or too enthusiastic for

getting co-opted by these powers, which operate through governments, international financial institutions, or corporate houses to endorse their visions of the world. This is perhaps a red flag that we need to be aware of in our pilgrimage. Instead, how can we be catalysts of a moral force – how can we activate a moral authority of the church/faith community and an alternate vision in partnership with other faith communities and social movements who are likewise restless about the moral decadence of our world? How can we enhance the efforts of and work with those who we believe and are committed to the values of God's kingdom, even if they do not say so, rather than remain silent and inert toward those who are actively working against it and furthering their own empires?

Challenges as opportunities

19. Thinking further, let me reiterate that pilgrimage is a journey that involves introspection, openness to learning through new encounters, changing and effecting change, shedding cumbersome weights and accruing helpful resources, and reaching the goal together. I would like to highlight a few possibilities that I believe will help our reflection to result in some decisive shifts.

20. First of all, pilgrimage requires an attitude of humility and repentance. We certainly have wrestled with some of these challenges in the past and have undoubtedly made some gains, and we thank God for these. Yet we need to constantly introspect on how much our reflective processes and consequent affirmations result in concrete action, in making a difference on the ground in the lives of the people on whose behalf we speak. Analysis, interpretation and statements seem to exhaust all that we do for justice and peace in our ecumenical gatherings. Where and what difference have these made, and what difference have we made as participants of these organizations – these are questions that we need to ask ourselves. It is perhaps time that we moved from rhetoric to action. The complex challenges that we face today and the witness of many already in the forefront of struggles demand that we move away from the culture of conferences and statements and begin to get engaged in actions that nurture hope and alternatives. What story do we have to share along the journey, stories of people in struggle against injustice and of hope? I would encourage all of us, in fact, each one of us to come to the next meeting of the central committee with a story of your personal participation in the pilgrimage. Let us share and be enriched by these experiences of hope and be inspired to do more as we move along.

21. Second, it is one thing to speak about injustice out there in the public square, but it is a completely different thing to deal with it right within our household. Abuse of power, deliberate silence and indifference on issues of justice, excessive pre-occupation with ecclesiastical issues, discrimination and restriction of all God's people at our tables of celebration and discernment and deliberation, and the continued monopolization of institutional spaces by some for long stretches that leaves hardly any space for the younger generation, do not make our assertions and affirmations about justice any more credible than empty rhetoric. While churches cannot be exempt from social influences, we need to uphold the integrity of our moral choices in the way we organize and manage our institutional expressions. To that extent, we must ensure that WCC not only remains a role model but also a trend setter in healthy processes of transparency and accountability, and of inclusion and participation by all who belong to the church.

22. Third, since the denial of justice and absence of peace are primarily expressions of irresponsible assertions of power and dominance, we must, in the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, actively be engaged in renouncing values and attitudes that glorify power and all vestiges that keep us trapped in fear of power, and denounce systems and cultures that diminish and deny life. In the same vein, we are called to hold the international financial institutions, military powers, economic policies, industry and political systems accountable rather than simply opting to be their endorsing agents. We need to address the root causes of migration and unemployment and expose and confront war-mongering and weapons industries and those models of development that ruthlessly plunder the earth and displace people to that extent. Pilgrimage is opting for costly discipleship.

23. Fourthly, pilgrimage is about hope breaking into our present, motivating us to move forward, overcoming hurdles, exploring and inventing creative possibilities along the way. It is a time to encounter God's liberating and transforming grace present and active in unexpected places and people, and to announce hope, through a creative engagement with the world. Hope in God in Jesus Christ compels us to discover something new and attempt something different. We therefore need to move from the nostalgia of the past, set aside our burdensome preoccupations and instruments that have outlived their purpose, and venture into new and relevant areas of engagement. At one point in time, the member churches and organizations needed instruments like the WCC, REOs, NCCs and others to bring them together and to learn to work together. Now our member churches are far ahead with their own creative ecumenical engagement in their specific contexts. We must perhaps refrain from functioning in the same mould and with same methodology of programmatic work in certain areas that we have done for decades. We need to reset our priorities and methodology as part of our work to accompany the member churches in the pilgrimage.

Ecumenical instruments as catalysts

24. Against this background, we also need to reflect on the role of ecumenical instruments such as the WCC, REOs and NCCs. What does it take to enable them to become more active and sustained in their ministry of accompanying churches and in promoting ecumenical action for justice and peace?

25. The vocation of justice and peace is not confined to specialized ministries but an essential mark of Christian discipleship and hence deeply spiritual both at personal and larger levels. However, sadly, many Christians keep these outside the ambit of religious practice. We have also relegated the essential responsibilities of mission, diakonia and public engagement to mission boards and specialized ministries. Some of us have taken up the responsibility of doing these on behalf of the churches rather than enabling churches to actively engage themselves. The challenge before us is: how do we encourage, enable and assist our churches to live out their love of God in Jesus Christ and of neighbour by resisting injustice and untruth? It is not important what we as the WCC, the central committee and the staff in Geneva do and say on behalf of the churches, but what our churches in each specific context are able to do because of us – that is what we must aim for.

26. We must also make the pilgrimage more invitational and inspiring for young people and women. First let me talk about young people. Youth are in the forefront of many creative endeavours today all over the world, leading movements and organizations. Governments, political parties, corporate houses and even reactionary forces are recruiting and relying on youth power and imagination. I do not recommend that we too must abuse or indoctrinate our young people like the way these do. But we must remember that it was the student and youth movements that were at the heart of the formation of the ecumenical movement through the World Student Christian Federation (WSCF), the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA). The missionary movement that began in 1910 too was a young people's movement. They are the lifeline and the root of the ecumenical movement and the church. Unfortunately, they do not seem to find our ecumenical institutions and churches sensitive to their questions, aspirations and imaginations, or capable of inspiring their creative energy. Perhaps our spaces are too overwhelmed with issues of institutional management, ecclesiastical traditions, and protocols. We have often said that the WCC and our churches will be open to young people but have done very little to create the space for them. Likewise, we must realize that women are in the forefront of many progressive movements for justice, peace and freedom in many parts of the world. We have not only been inconsistent in our solidarity with women in their struggles for dignity, equity, justice and participation but also failed to recognize their capacities to persist in the struggles for justice and peace. Let me commend the Pan-African Women of Faith, which has just concluded its international consultation in Washington, DC, for taking it upon themselves to lift their voices and votes to end hunger and poverty as they advocate for the spiritually, socially and materially marginalized and seek to influence leaders at national, regional, and international levels to

promulgate and implement policies that are pro-poor and strengthen commitment to women's leadership. We must realize that our young people and women have the creative capacities and moral stamina to lead us forward in new pathways. Pilgrimage offers an excellent opportunity to rely on these resources not only in our search for justice and peace but also for more creative and credible expressions of ecumenism that are more organic than cerebral, and more people-based than institutional.

27. Justice and peace are not the sole concerns of Christians and churches. Let me reiterate that there are many others along the way, in fact, ahead of us. Should we not partner with them or at least strengthen partnership with them? There was a moment in the life of the WCC that was rich with the fresh insights and challenges that social movements brought and that enriched the meaning and purpose of the ecumenical movement. In fact, their resources of studies, analysis and participation helped the WCC to get engaged in the historic struggles for justice, freedom and human rights in South Africa, Latin America and elsewhere and earned it the global reputation as a credible voice of the voiceless. We affirm that the church is a community of believers and a communion of all God's people involved in the mission of heralding God's reign. There are so many, some right within our churches, who are actively engaged in the struggles for justice and peace in many places. I hope that this pilgrimage will help us open the space for them and reclaim this partnership.

Partnership for justice and peace as partnership with God

28. In closing, let me reiterate that the pilgrimage offers us immense possibilities to reimagine ourselves as a movement of God's people in the mission – open and inclusive, and agile and receptive to the promptings of the Spirit. We have affirmed time and again that the church is a people's movement and that the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace will also engage people of other faiths and men and women of good will. Let us reclaim and rebuild our capacity for discourse. There is room in the gospel for disagreement, but there is no room for disengagement. As we walk together we should be mindful that even under normal processes of walks or journeys, people will stop, greet, join the walk for a while and some may branch off as you continue toward the destination. Let us walk together, with those who are denied justice, with people of all living faiths, movements, and all others who are striving for justice and peace, kindling hope through creative alternatives, speaking truth to powers and holding them accountable, so that in this partnership for justice and peace we may find ourselves working with our God of life. God of life, lead us to justice and peace.

APPENDIX II Report of the General Secretary

A FELLOWSHIP OF LIVING HOPE

Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit

1. Introduction: Reporting – An Account of Hope

1. The greatest aspect of WCC theme Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace is that it forces us to lift our eyes, to believe that we belong to a movement that is searching for what is better, even for what is best. (We pray every day that the kingdom of God should come.)

2. The church is a pilgrimage people, just as it says in the Faith and Order convergence document *The Church: Towards a Common Vision*. This is a people defined by hope. The church is "given a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Peter 1:4). This living hope is not grounded in something we leave behind us, just as a matter of history, or something we only project into life after death. It is the living hope nurtured every day by the Holy Spirit. This is what we need when we enter into all of the challenges of life, in different and even dangerous landscapes.

3. Wherever we go, we are even called to "always be prepared to make a defence to anyone who calls you to account for the hope that is in you" (1 Peter 3:15). Therefore, the hope that we carry is not given by ourselves, and it is not to be kept to ourselves. The hope given in the cross and the resurrection of Christ shapes our perspectives and relations of life accordingly, but it is not a private issue or for a privileged group of people. This hope is to be shared, particularly with those who are in greatest need of it. It is a hope for the whole of God's creation, given through the once-for-all and one-for-all suffering and resurrection of Jesus Christ. If it is not for all, it is not Christian hope.

4. Thus the fellowship of churches in the World Council of Churches and the wider ecumenical movement are always tested by this criterion of hope. Are we shaped by the living hope given to us? Are we holding ourselves accountable, asking ourselves if hope is what is seen and heard in our words and actions, or are we destroying the hope of others? Are we breaking "the bruised reed" (Isaiah 42:3)? Are we conveying hope in a way that the words of the risen Christ, "Do not be afraid," can be taken seriously? Are we part of that culture of life, are we protecting and nurturing the life that is manifested in the unique resurrection of Christ?

5. This is not about generalized optimism, but instead about conveying a reason and motivation for hope. Often it means being able to see beyond what we see and expecting something more and something else, looking for justice and peace, and nothing less. Hope is a criterion of our Christian faith. I think it should be part of a proper critique of religion, including our own, demanding of ourselves whether we are nurturing hope, rather than destroying it.

6. This is the bottom line of our reporting and accountability for the World Council of Churches and for me as general secretary. This is about more than whether we have success in achieving our objectives or if we see a bright future – which we certainly should discuss – but also whether we can say that we have done what we could with our efforts and available resources to promote, to nurture, to share and not to destroy hope. Sometimes we have to do it even against the obvious reasons to be worried or even afraid.

7. We express this living hope by saying that we are together on a pilgrimage of justice and peace. How is our work in the WCC contributing to that? How can that happen in what we plan to do? I will offer some illustrations in response to those questions.

8. I hope you hear the many voices and the diverse dimensions of this hope in the ways of reporting to you from all my colleagues. In this central committee it will be done in different ways.

9. Since we met two years ago, we have walked a long way on the pilgrimage of justice and peace; and, we have worked hard together to make a difference in the world. I am proud to state that reality on behalf of the leadership of the central committee, the executive committee, as well as the commissions and the committees we have appointed, but not least on behalf of the colleagues working day to day for the WCC. We have had a comprehensive, intensive and innovative period of work.

10. The reporting to this meeting has some new features. The revised structure of governance is now working quite well, I would say. The role of the central committee to give overall directions to policy and relations is now in place, meeting every second year. Thus, the major report for you to read and respond to is from the last two years of work of the whole council as it has implemented the strategic objectives you as a central committee defined for 2014-2017.

11. You also received the report on progress with the financial strategy for 2014-2017, which includes reference to progress in the building project at the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva. Balanced budgets were prepared for 2015 and 2016, and approved by the executive committee in due time. In January 2015, we had to deal with a severe drop in the value of our income in Swiss francs, due to changes in the policy of the Swiss National Bank on exchange rates. We managed to adjust and take measures to handle it in due time. We see that the total programme income budget for this year is actually higher than total programme income recorded last year, and that the WCC is not in an economic crisis. Membership contributions are at a stable level, and our major funding partners continue to be very supportive, as much as they can be, and want also to work more with the council on certain issues in our programme plans. We continue to be very grateful for the way member churches and specialized ministries are faithfully supporting the work of the WCC financially. There are other sources of income coming, and we need to continue to work with great ambition to develop relationships with other funding partners.

12. The plan for the building project in Geneva is under review by the authorities. We wait for the approval of the area development plan, which will hopefully be delivered this year, and we need to discuss in this meeting (particularly in the steering group for this project) how to evaluate different possible strategies, including financial models, as we approach the next stage of the project (see Appendix I).

13. Furthermore, you have the report of the executive committee from its work, and the summarized programme reports. In addition to that you have been receiving the minutes from the meetings of the executive committee these last two years, reporting on how the programme plans and budgets have been implemented the last two years. My own reporting of the work and initiatives of the general secretary is printed in the minutes of the executive committee, including accounts of visits, meetings, and contributions through speeches and in other publications. In addition to that, you have received the annual reports with summaries and pictures that we share with all who are interested in the work of the WCC: 2014: “Together on the pilgrimage of justice and peace.” 2015: “Making a difference together in the world.”

14. My report to you as central committee, therefore, will have another character than former reports. Substantial parts of what I usually have included in my reports are this time to be found in the reports mentioned above.

2. The Pilgrimage

15. The theme Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace has brought us a new opportunity to continue our legacy of the WCC in all its manifold richness. It has brought something new into the heart of our commitment, the logic of the programmes and the approach to the work. We have developed the understanding and practice of the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace through the programmatic work and through many reflections. It has been important to not let this be a parallel process or a parallel programme of the

WCC. A special reference group along with a theological advisory group have given advice to the executive committee and to me, as general secretary. This has helped us greatly to see new avenues and new ways of working together under this common perspective for all we do.

16. The methodology of our work has been more focused on how we work together, and how the initiatives and the ideas for a pilgrimage of justice and peace can possibly be elaborated and pursued in different contexts and by different agents. It has not been a dictate from Geneva but an invitation to participate as you and your church discern it necessary and possible in your context. A renewed invitation has been sent to you and all of the member churches, and I strongly commend that relatively short text for your reading. We see more inspiring examples of how the pilgrimage approach has made sense for the people in the member churches, among ecumenical partners, and others who want to relate to our vision and objectives.

17. Making use of a familiar idea from our faith traditions and practices gives us an incentive to integrate our work for justice and peace with our faith. These traditions speak in different ways about pilgrimage. Together they remind us that pilgrimage requires new courage, honest and humble attitudes, willingness to take new roads and routes, always seeking closeness to reality in us and around us. Above all, the pilgrimage expresses in a new way a deep desire and prayer that the kingdom of God will come, that the will of God be done on earth as it is in heaven.

18. The pilgrimage theme has also strengthened the ability to foster hope within the ecumenical movement through dual dimensions of self-reflection: critique and construction. We must name what is wrong, and make a contribution together to change. We are doing this exercise of accountability both to dismantle the evil of the cross and to foster the rebirth and renewal of life through the resurrection. This has created a practice and attitude of mutual accountability. We are not so afraid of listening to what others are saying – even critically – if we can do it in a joint commitment to speaking the truth to one another. We never do so with the purpose of diminishing or discriminating against the other, but to correct our direction, to learn from our mistakes and join our steps forward.

19. To further expand on this, to critique is to specifically name what needs to be changed; construction calls upon us to offer contributions to the life together in hope.

20. “When our Lord Jesus Christ said ‘repent,’ he meant that the whole life should be one of repentance.” This was the first thesis of Martin Luther in 1517, and the beginning of the processes called Reformation – which will be commemorated and celebrated in the coming year. The impulse to deal with sin seriously, also our own mistakes and shortcomings, has been an inspiration also for the ecumenical movement. To address what is wrong – our divisions, our failing to witness to the truth, our insufficient work for justice and peace, our complicity with unrighteousness, neglecting to be sensitive to places of discrimination, racism, oppression, and violence in an honest, serious and consistent way, not cheating or covering up while absolving ourselves from the realities – addressing these should be a sign of a Christian throughout his or her whole life. This should also be the approach from us as churches together. This repentance is needed for the purpose of service to those in need and to repudiate a focus on our own self-destructiveness or our own self-righteousness.

21. The other dimension of a pilgrimage is to be constantly aware of how the resurrection of Christ changes our perspectives and our perceptions, our aspirations and our understanding of how transformation is possible. The power of the resurrection is working in our lives, in the whole of creation, and in the church. This is particularly emphasized in the tradition shared with all of us from the Orthodox family, who are now gathered in Crete for the historic Holy and Ecumenical Synod, under the leadership of the Ecumenical Patriarch, Bartholomew. Last November I was very moved by being in the “Resurrection of Christ” Cathedral in Tirana, Albania. There, former WCC president Archbishop Anastasios hosted a gathering of the Global Christian Forum to share and discuss how to show Christian unity and solidarity with Christians who are living under different threats, discrimination or even

persecution. Through his experience and his biblical reflections he guided us into the deep meaning of the resurrection of Christ present also under such circumstances. We are called to be light in the world, the light of Christ, not to provoke, but to give a real hope.

22. The hope we have been given is not something we can keep for ourselves, but something intended to be shared, and to be made present in all contexts and before all people. We do this in the service of God's mission. The last mission statement, *Together towards Life: Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes,* also carries this calling to be aware of how the God of life is at work, and particularly among those who are in the so-called margins. We are looking not only at our own lives as individuals, but at our churches, our communities, our nations, our fellowship as one humanity, with different religions or no religion, still in the one world. The pilgrimage is fundamentally a way of relating to one another and to God, in this world that is our home. We are on a pilgrimage to search for change, for transformation of ourselves and of the world in which we live. We do so in the name of the coming kingdom of God with its justice, peace and joy.

23. We find in places where the values of the kingdom of God are ignored, violated, even destroyed, that the struggle for justice and peace calls upon all resources and creativity and time available. We see signs of how the churches, with the strength of conciliar fellowship nationally, regionally and globally are able to contribute to the justice and peace so urgently called for. We see that the WCC can make a difference; we see that by changing ourselves we can inspire others to change.

24. The pilgrimage perspective means trying new directions and being willing to be ahead, in the forefront of what we recommend for the churches to do. This is demanding, but utterly exciting, sometimes empowering, sometimes though, rather overwhelming. Concretely, we would wish there were always more resources available, even as we are able to adjust to changing currency exchange rates. In all we do on our pilgrimage, we need to continue to be faithful stewards of our resources, not at least our human resources.

25. The theme of pilgrimage has focused the role of the World Council of Churches to be one of facilitating, convening, sharing, and strengthening cooperation and new relationships under a common vision. We have seen how the openness implied in our pilgrimage makes us open to new methods, new partners, and ways of moving. Being open about our intentions and our strategies has made the WCC a more comprehensive organization, even with fewer funds. Seeing ourselves as a fellowship, a movement, an institution, a network, our task is thus to facilitate and convene so we make use of the many dynamics between us.

26. Once again, we do this in mutual accountability, in terms of self-critique and critique, and in sharing the real reasons for and signs of hope. This is a unique character of being a follower of Christ: we are not afraid of taking responsibility for both our sins and our hope, both the cross and the resurrection, both the regret and the affirmations of our contributions.

3. In Changing Landscapes

27. When we in this Norwegian context for this particular central committee meeting in 2016 are reflecting on what it means to be on a pilgrimage in *changing landscapes,* we are inspired by the geography around us, as well as the vivid expressions of pilgrimage for women and men of today coming to this city of Trondheim, literally walking in these landscapes. We also see that our presence here is a call to open new landscapes for those who are pilgrims here and those who guide them or receive them, to help people in this place see that they are all called to the great vision of justice and peace in the world and in themselves.

28. We are also here in the area of the Sami peoples, and they remind us of the deep connection between land, people and identity. The days before our central committee meeting, there has been a significant consultation among representatives from indigenous peoples and churches around the world

here in Trondheim. Their statement will be made known to us through media and their contributions belong to our Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace.

29. The metaphor "changing landscapes" requires some reflection. One of the reasons for trust and stability is that at least some parts of our landscapes remain the same. For the population making their living from fishing off the coasts of Norway, the old mountains gave clear points for orientation, even conveying the sense of belonging and connection to home. So the idea of a possible change of landscapes could be a threat rather than something exciting. And I am sure many would recognize that we want something to be stabilized, not changing.

30. There are at least three relevant aspects that make sense to talk about "changing landscapes" in our context as a meaningful metaphor:

a) There are different ways to see the landscapes, different perspectives visible to us through changing light, changing weather and seasons.
b) We are assessing differences because we are moving, describing and comparing, learning and making stories to be told and to be understood about the landscapes.
c) Landscapes are cultivated through care, agriculture, or may be developed through buildings, roads or other constructions. We must not forget the landscapes that are changing through lack of care, ignorance, or activities that lead to deterioration, destruction, or even catastrophes where new barriers dividing people and life may come into being. This is our interaction with reality, an accountability we cannot move, or fly away from. What we know is that we can participate in the work of the creator by serving the life of the creation and the life of communities.

31. As you hear, the metaphor of landscapes leads us to the three-fold scheme of doing theology in a context: to see, to assess, to act. We also realize that the landscape metaphor brings us to another connection between metaphor, faith, and reality. It is in this dynamic our hope is developing.

32. All three aspects in different combinations play into our reflection on pilgrimage of justice and peace. In very concrete meanings and in more symbolic meanings, we see changing landscapes, changing realities around us that have relevance for what the pilgrimage of justice and peace means.

33. We do not use these metaphors only for rhetorical effect. It is to make us aware that we are really in this world, in nature, in God's creation, not living in an abstract state, when we are talking about our life together as churches and our Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace. We should be attentive to the landscape around us, just as you are when you are literally walking and not driving or flying over a landscape. The pilgrimage theme is both an image and a reality, as are the symbols, the sacraments, the concepts of church and the world, so too with the ecumenical movement and the World Council of Churches.

34. We know that communication belongs at the heart of being on a Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace. We cannot give account of the reality around us, or articulate our hope if we are not communicating this to one another and to the world. To share is to inform, but also to bring a challenge and a motivation into different contexts. Over the last two years we have been developing new means of communication, introducing greater flexibility, more images, more voices, more faces, more ideas, and more sharing. We are understanding communication as a dimension of what we are doing and how we are doing it, not only telling about we have done and where we have been. The objectives for our work in communication are to develop a more thorough practice of giving account and analysis of our struggles, injustices and destructive conflicts, but also to communicate how people of faith share hope and are acting to create hope, in all contexts and landscapes.

4. Moving in Changing Landscapes

35. Let me share some observations in changing landscapes of great relevance for the work of the WCC over the last years. I cannot have any ambition of giving a total picture, but will offer some pictures of relevance for determining where we are and where we are going. We see these through the lens of our Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace.

a. The ecumenical landscapes

36. We ought first to reflect on where we are in our hopes for the unity of the church and the many expressions of stronger relations between our churches. In different ways we can see that the agendas and objectives of the WCC are shared more widely, and there are new openings for working with member churches and ecumenical partners. Consistently cultivating relationships with international organizations yields substantial contributions.

37. There are many signs of how member churches are bringing expectations and commitment to the work and role of the council. It can be seen in involvement and participation in our work and in willingness to maintain or even increase contributions in times of financial challenges. The pilgrimage theme has been transformed into many initiatives by member churches and partner organizations, such that relating to the WCC is much more than following a programme from Geneva. Rather it is about being involved in the same movement and objectives from within different contexts and from different perspectives. The visits to many member churches, and participating in events at regional or national levels, have been significant opportunities to find new expressions of what this pilgrimage means.

38. In the wider ecumenical landscape we see some significant developments. The pilgrimage approach to ecumenical relations is strongly emphasized in Pope Francis' messages on several occasions addressing the call to unity and common witness and service in the world. This has been expressed also in his address to the WCC as we celebrated 50 years of the Joint Working Group with the Roman Catholic Church last year. The openness to new ways for seeking the unity and common life of churches was also recently expressed in the meeting in Cuba between Patriarch Kirill of the Russian Orthodox Church and Pope Francis. Incidentally, in Cuba the churches just celebrated the 75th anniversary of the Council of Churches of Cuba, one of the oldest councils of this kind in the world. The meeting between the WCC and World Evangelical Alliance leadership teams in Bossey last month is another sign of how there are merging objectives and agendas in addressing the call to contribute to justice and peace in the world. We also had a meeting for renewing the relationships between the WCC and the United Bible Societies in Bossey recently. We find that most of the themes of the programme of WEA and the UBS correspond to programmes in the WCC. Even more encouraging, I find that knowing that we have overlapping constituencies, we also are identifying more overlapping agendas. A lot of these common agendas are addressing how we can offer hopeful Christian witness for people experiencing injustices, conflict, lack of security, even persecution. Acknowledgment of places of hurt in the world and the efforts to reflect our life-giving hope in Christ play out in new ways.

39. Within our analysis we unfortunately also see new divisions. Some are more focused on the protection of national identity, culture, territories, and often privileges. When borders are closed in Europe to refugees in urgent need for protection and help, because of the overt or disguised reason that they are Muslims, with the argument that this is in the interest of the Christian heritage and values, we have to say that is not an expression of Christian heritage and values. We need to nurture a common understanding of how we inspire hope and overcome fear when we are facing challenges and crises like these, giving priority to the human needs of those who have nothing. This is really about giving priority to those who need their human dignity and rights respected, and about giving them hope.

40. There are other challenges to the unity of the church experienced within the churches and the communions of churches. Some of them are related to different understandings of how best to provide

direction and hope for the life we live in our closest relations of love and loyalty. As the churches find methods to deal with these challenges to their unity, the WCC should be offering a space to reflect on these challenges together in an atmosphere of trust and openness. The WCC does offer a way of practicing mutual accountability to one another through the procedures and practice of consensus-building. In that way we build consensus for common decisions through active listening to one another. We also build a sense of accountability to the differences by distinguishing between where we do have consensus and where we do not have, or in which part of an issue we have consensus and in which we do not. This opens us up for conversations about difficult issues in an atmosphere where we do not have to make majority-based decisions overruling those in the minority. This also makes us able to promote initiatives to discern how we can live in our fellowship with the remaining differences.

41. To give life to our hope, we have to focus on how our shared faith in Christ calls us to relationship, before we define the differences in interpretations and traditions. We should emphasize the significance of what we do share in our faith in the crucified and resurrected Christ, and understand that it exists prior to other dimensions of our belief and expressions of faith in words and deeds. These principles and methods of the WCC, operating on a basis of consensus, can also give inspiration to churches and communions dealing with their differences and divisions.

b. In the landscapes of suffering and war

42. The WCC has had ambitious programmes in different landscapes since the last central committee. The commitment to address certain conflicts within countries where our churches are struggling for justice and peace has been expressed in visits to accompany and to contribute to peace processes. Colleagues and partners, members of our governing bodies, including the leadership of the central committee, have been actively involved in visits and initiatives in this sense.

43. We need to continue to focus on what a *just peace* means and how it can be pursued in all the different contexts in which we are called to offer signs of hope. I am convinced that in all contexts and landscapes we are in, we should be the voice that brings the focus and effort to establish a just peace. To end the suffering of the people and bring a platform of justice for a sustainable peace must be the highest priority. We have continued to emphasize that there is no military solution to the war in Syria. We have insisted on pursuing the peace processes as the highest priority, to stop the senseless wars and killings and the consequences for the whole population of Syria. As the effect of the war now has even more implications for other countries, particularly Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey, but also the great flow of refugees to Europe, the constantly remaining question is how to end the war itself. Several encounters with the UN envoy to Syria, Steffan de Mistura, have confirmed the importance of the churches nationally and globally in these efforts, as well as inter-faith dialogues for this purpose.

44. The values, the attitudes, the willingness to work for a just peace take place in all four dimensions that we have developed in our call to just peace. Since Jamaica in 2011, we have together called for just peace in the communities, in the market places, among the people and the nations, and with the earth.

45. In all these contexts I see different roles for the WCC involvement. First of all, it is to support and secure the presence of churches and their representatives in the initiatives for peace. This is a primary task for the WCC. We do so in cooperation with other ecumenical partners, like the regional ecumenical organizations and national councils of churches, the specialized ministries and other ecumenical actors. This is to get a constructive dynamic between being local and knowing what is going on and with whom to work for just peace, and being connected to an international fellowship of churches with the relations, experiences and the freedom to act and speak in other ways than the local and national church can do. Further, we can facilitate work together with international partners and organizations, e.g., the UN agencies, to mobilize attention to and support for initiatives that can lead to a just peace.

46. Our role is also to be part of the spirituality of peace, the prayers, the preaching and teaching that open the spaces for the real conversations – the mutually accountable encounters that can speak both about the sins and the hope, seen in the light of our faith in Christ. That means we need resilience in caring for the values, the attitudes, and the willingness to work for a just peace whatever happens.

47. Critically we can ask what has been achieved, whether our involvement makes a difference. This cannot be answered sweepingly and in a generalized way. We could wish we had more power to be heard and seen, particularly to strengthen even more the role of the churches in establishing just peace. Nevertheless, the role of the churches, and their strength when united for the sake of peace in a nation or a region, is affirmed in so many contexts. I am grateful and deeply impressed by how many of our member churches and ecumenical partners contribute to the peace processes.

48. Some of you, accompanied by staff, have been involved in this work for peace, as have I. For that purpose we have visited Korea, Ukraine, Lebanon (to address the situation in Syria and Iraq), Israel and Palestine, South Sudan, Burundi, Colombia, Nigeria, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. These have all been real expressions of the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace, and should be understood as such in a spiritual and practical way. These have been pilgrimages of listening, caring, accompanying, assessing, acting together in advocacy and building relations of justice and peace.

49. This year we focus particularly on the needs for just peace in the Middle East, giving new attention to the conflict between Israel and Palestine. We have no other agenda than just peace for both people. We have a significant expression of the pilgrimage of justice and peace in our Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel, and we are revising and renewing it with our partners to make it as relevant as possible. We do see – together with the accompaniers – the daily incidents of injustices and problems for the people in the occupied territories, and the lack of peace for the Israeli and the Palestinian peoples. Many with us do see that this an issue of justice that must be addressed to avoid even worse realities for both peoples. The occupation and its effects create an impossible situation that must be addressed to find a way toward peace. We are also this year particularly working strategically with our member churches in the USA to discuss how this aspect can become a shared basis for advocacy in the American context for a just peace.

50. The WCC has had a strong and on-going commitment to work for nuclear disarmament, and since the last central committee meeting we have also addressed the enormous risks of our use of nuclear power to produce electricity. I visited Japan, including the affected Fukushima area, after the breakdown of the nuclear power plant. A group of several church leaders led by Bishop Mary Ann Swenson visited Hiroshima last year, making significant contributions to this particular call to accountability and respect for the hope for peace for humanity.

51. We have established a network of peace initiatives. Last week we gathered church participants from several of these countries for a workshop in Johannesburg, South Africa commemorating 40 years since the Soweto massacre. The churches share with one another, from different parts of the world, how we are fulfilling our role of being peacemakers and calling for justice.

52. How we share the experiences and the wisdom that we are gaining, often in a very costly way, belongs also to our legacy of ecumenical formation. Therefore, the costly unity and the accounts of hope we are seeking have to be developed through formation and education. The investments we make in our ecumenical formation programmes are significant, because they are investments in people and their development as church leaders and activists, bringing signs of hope into all kinds of contexts. I am encouraged to meet former Bossey students on my visits to countries and churches. I get a strong sense that they are resource persons for the work for unity in each place, but also a source of inspiration for building communities of justice and peace.

53. We have initiated new short-term courses of *diakonia* instead of offering individual scholarships for students of diaconal work. We believe that this is serving the churches and the entire ecumenical movement, building capacities to be agents of hope.

c. The landscapes of religion and violence

54. Religion should be a source of hope. Where it becomes a motivation to support the interests of a few, their power and even their abuse of power into violence, going so far as to build communities based on such a violent expression of religion, we see the extreme anti-metaphor of a Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace. We do see examples of religion as a motivation for violent actions and attitudes, and we have to admit that for many human beings religions represent more of a problem than a blessing and encouragement.

55. The issue of violence and religion will be dealt with in this meeting. It is an issue in the changing landscape of how religion may be explicitly used for legitimizing extreme positions and violence, even if there is no support from religious leaders. Initiatives to address these challenges in a joint inter-faith framework have been pursued by the WCC over the last years.

56. We have prepared a conversation through a text shared with you before the meeting, to bring our wisdom together on the theme of religion and violence in this meeting. This is a moment where we can try to understand how the violence against groups identified by religion or violence committed in the name of religion, is growing and threatening people in all continents.

57. We also see that the willingness to address needs for justice and peace more and more dominate the inter-religious dialogues and encounters in which we are involved as WCC. We have sought conversations among Christians and Muslims in Syria and in Nigeria. After the summer the WCC will participate in launching a Muslim-Christian monitoring centre in Nigeria, an exercise about "being in the shoes of the other" in terms of seeing, assessing and walking with the other. This is a model developed after an international and interfaith visit three years ago. It has now grown into a new and remarkable initiative for justice and peace. We shall monitor together, as Muslims and Christians in Nigeria, the violence – particularly targeting religious groups or motivated by religious affiliation. We also want to see this institute be a model for what can be done in other contexts and countries.

58. Another expression of interreligious cooperation for justice and peace has been the joint project with the International Labour Organization to support Muslim-Christian initiatives in Egypt to address social justice and access to decent work. This has received a lot of positive attention as a sign of hope for how we can join forces to achieve a better future for young people living together in a multi-religious context with many challenges.

59. These initiatives are driven by a sense of accountability to the hope given in Christ that the will of God-Creator should be done also for those who are not believers in Christ.

60. Domestic violence, particularly against women and children, are affecting approximately 15 per cent of all women in the world. Some of this violence is accepted as part of life without being addressed as an attack on humanity, on all humanity. Could we imagine ignoring a report saying that 15 per cent of the world population is tortured now and then? This is not to be disconnected from the reflection of violence and religion. We have to admit that those who commit domestic violence and those who are victims of it, belong also to religious communities. For several years the WCC has been leading the campaign "Thursdays in Black" to combat rape and violence against women. This is an initiative that deserves attention and support, particularly from men.

61. Moreover, we find that there are religious practices and cultures that can legitimize this kind of violence through ideas about superiority, domination and privilege of men versus women, and falsely claiming a right to use violence in the education of children. This dreadful legitimation continues

through acceptance of women being discriminated against as part of patriarchal societies or as a result of consumerism related to sex, or unquestioned economic injustices that lead to abuse of women or child workers. These problems are interconnected. What we have to admit is that they also are connected to practices and teaching of religion, and that even texts of religions are used to justify attitudes of this kind.

62. When we as WCC reflect on the multifaceted connections between religion and violence, we must do so by being accountable to our hope in both senses elaborated above. We have to be critically accountable for ways in which religion and also our Christian religion can be a motivation for fundamentalism, absolutism, exclusion, enmity and even violence. Moreover, we must be accountable to the resources of hope for creating nonviolent, vibrant, life-promoting communities and relations focusing on the best and most constructive dimensions of religion and those who are followers of religious faith. We have to go beyond saying that it is about abuse or misunderstanding of religion; it is also about using religious texts, authorities and practises in a non-accountable way.

63. None of us can use a reference to God or any religion to legitimate destructive and provocative actions of violence. None of us should try, and none of us should get away with using religion to crush, to destroy or to deny other human beings their right to have hope. They are all created in the image of God and included in the love and power of the crucified and resurrected Jesus Christ. Particularly we as Christians should be very strong and clear in conveying such messages in the inter-religious dialogues and relations. The accountability for our hope should be particularly focused in these landscapes.

d. The landscapes of discrimination, xenophobia and racism

64. Since we are in Europe, let us reflect on how the situation here received a lot of attention this last year due to an unprecedented flow of refugees and migrants seeking to enter Europe via the Mediterranean Sea and the Aegean Sea. In other continents there are more displaced persons than here, but they do not get the same attention, year after year staying in refugee camps e.g., in Kenya.

65. The refugee “crisis” is a most relevant expression for the refugees and their homelands, the challenge to be addressed for the European countries and their citizens. This became very near and clear as the vice-moderator H.E. Metropolitan Gennadios invited colleagues and me to visit Greece to get first-hand information about the refugee situation. In October last year we visited Idomeni, on the border with Macedonia, where so many refugees have been blocked from further travels to other European countries. Again we saw there and in Athens how the churches locally and nationally use their resources to give hope to people who have left everything behind in fear for their lives.

66. Together with European church leaders the WCC organized two consultations to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and support among the churches to determine how to react in a way that could give those who needed asylum hope of a better life. We did so together with UN agencies, exploring how the civil society and particularly the churches and other religious communities in Europe could contribute to advocacy, and to addressing the material and social needs of refugees.

67. As churches we have to be firm in our call for justice. The rights of the asylum seekers from Asia, the Middle East and Africa are the same as those who benefited from them in the years after they were expressed in the Geneva conventions (1951). This is a matter of international law and of justice in a moral sense.

68. Among the many reactions to this situation, the growing xenophobia, the racist reactions to people from other parts of the world, particularly mixed with Islamophobic connotations, have been alarming. The churches are tested in their understanding of what Christian values really are. The tendency to make a political gain from the right-wing politics has been disappointing to see, particularly when it is mixed with nationalistic and Christian pretentions.

69. The situation in this country of Norway is one we see in other European countries today. The increase of asylum seekers has become a political challenge, and to some extent a situation where some are provoking polarization in the people. Churches in several countries in Europe have together with other partners called for and offered a lot to establish stronger cooperation in this situation. The challenges are real and must be handled with wisdom and justice, but they will not be solved by politics nurturing attitudes of fear.

70. While we see fewer wars between states than some years ago, be they hot or cold wars, we see many conflicts evolving between different groups within one and the same country. This is also manifested in the many incidents and even massacres driven by racism. Walls are built to secure and to exclude, to divide and to discriminate, whether they are physical walls or not.

71. Here, too, the WCC has had ambitious programmes in different landscapes in the period since Busan. In addition to visits to churches in countries experiencing the violence of war, we have organized pilgrimages to address injustices, discrimination, violence and conflicts in contexts where the churches have called upon us for accompaniment and action. This has resulted in visits by church leaders, members of the WCC central committee, colleagues and myself to the USA, to Canada, to South Africa and to Brazil. I assume that you have been informed through our website and other sources of information about how and when these visits and initiatives have been carried out.

72. The reality of racism in the US became a shocking experience for the pilgrimage led by Dr Agnes Abuom in April. She shares with insight and passion about this in her report. The interaction between US churches and leaders and the wider ecumenical fellowship on these issues is helpful for all. This was also what happened during the time of the Programme to Combat Racism, where the interaction for example between the civil rights movement in the US and the anti-apartheid movement shaped the discussions and the efforts of the WCC. As I mentioned, in South Africa two weeks ago we commemorated 40 years after the Soweto Student Uprising, the event that became so important for the fight against the evil of apartheid. It reminded us that we have to act, and act together, in urgency, against the systems of racism. People are injured and dying, and a just peace must be pursued. The need for a living hope is present, the programme finished but the task to overcome racism is ours as well.

73. Jim Wallis has written about “America’s original sin.” Racism is a feature in the history of the USA, and it is becoming visible in a new way, even exacerbated by statements in the on-going presidential election campaign. Racism is expressed as violent attacks, in practical and subtle discrimination through the legal system, or in blunt disrespect for others due to their origin, their ethnic or social background, their religion or their political positions. We cannot ignore this growing phenomenon in any country, nor in any church nor in the fellowship of churches. This is especially so, since we hoped it should be better after years of combatting racism and after improvement through legislation, for example in the USA after the strong civil rights movements some decades ago.

74. The expression “original sin” is very appropriate to describe the dimensions of obvious and unconscious forms of racism in the US. That nation has a very special history, but it also reflects the reality of the world outside it. Therefore, I find it remarkable how the situation there is a mirror that can make more visible the landscapes of racism, superiority, privilege, xenophobia, discrimination, division, ethnic-based violence, hate speech, exclusion, and persecution in other countries and continents.

e. The landscapes in which children (and grandchildren) play

75. We are all children in the first part of our lives, when we all depend on the care, love and protection of others. Later on, we learn that it is our responsibility to give the same to the next generations coming up. They definitely need to have space and reasons for hope. Children have the right to trust that there is access to nutrition, a home, to care, to nurturing of their spiritual and social needs, to proper education and that they have rights to protection from violence and abuse from adults in their close

relations. Still, this is not the case for so many children in the world. Moreover, we know that religion sometimes legitimizes or condones violence against children as part of their upbringing. I belong to the first generation that lives with legislation against any form of violence against children in this country.

76. The initiative to have a formal cooperation with UNICEF to protect children, to make churches safe spaces for children, to commit ourselves as churches to work for children's rights and wellbeing, comes as a very natural part of our Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace. This is also a way to remind ourselves as WCC and as churches that human rights are universal, something that corresponds to our deepest theological convictions in the faith in the triune God, who has created all of us in the image of God. God, who is bringing life and salvation to all of us, does so irrespective of our age and level of education or understanding. This is a new track that has been opened for us as WCC, and I am very grateful to UNICEF and to our member churches and governing bodies who have strongly supported that we make these commitments and also enter into relationships that really can improve our capacities to address the rights of children.

f. The landscape of ecology and economy

77. The landscapes in which the next generations shall have their livelihood, their food and clean water, are the landscapes we are living in today. There is not an alternative planet. There is no other alternative to leaving this planet in better shape for them than it is now, and definitely there is no alternative but to stop the emissions and the destruction of our lands that follows from the way we live, using energy for all kind of purposes.

78. The WCC involvement to address climate change has been on-going for decades, and we have been a leader in mobilizing faith communities to take responsibilities and call all to accountability for the earth, our common home. This has become a strong ecumenical and inter-religious agenda, and many of our member churches have been and are leading in the national and international discourse and initiatives to make the changes required to stop the global warming with all its negative effects.

79. In 2015 pilgrimages for the climate became a new and unprecedented common action around the world, inspired by the WCC Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace. I participated here in Trondheim and in many other places, also toward the goal of the COP 21 in Paris. Together we handed over more than 1.8 million signatures from participants in these pilgrimages. From the reactions and the character of the discussions in Paris, I am convinced that this faith-based – but open to all – expression has had an effect on the politicians in the world and in reaching their agreement. I was asked to address the summit on behalf of all faith-based communities present, and I did so by claiming that our word of faith must be a word of hope. We can make it, we can make a difference together; it is not too late. We have the right to hope that there is a future in this common home for ourselves and our descendants.

80. We have decided to link the work on ecology and economy as we see more clearly how these issues are connected in so many ways. The exploitation of resources and the inequalities in the sharing of the fruits of economic activity are significant issues of global injustice. Climate change must be addressed by another economic model, based on a sustainable use of resources and renewable energy. Moreover, this new green economy should not be a privilege for only the industrialized and developed world to benefit from. This should be a new opportunity to steward the resources in our common home in a better and fairer way. The greed of this world is leading to enormous economic inequalities, but also to the enormous destruction of the environment in which we have to live. The cooperation with ecumenical partners on this agenda is of great importance, and we are already planning new initiatives to address both ecological challenges and concrete challenges in the financial architectures and practices in the world.

g. *The landscape of sustainability and development*

81. The UN member states, with the UN agencies and other international organizations, are in an implementation phase of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) for 2030. More than before, the WCC is asked to be an active partner to many of them in their efforts to reach these very comprehensive and ambitious goals. This is indeed not a new landscape for us, but is larger and more relevant as we are trying to respond positively and realistically to these invitations.

82. David Navarro, who is coordinating the UN efforts in this respect, said to us and our partners in a meeting this winter that due to the holistic character of these goals, there is no way to reach them without the active cooperation of faith-based organizations (as they call us). The closeness of religious communities to the realties, but also to the people who should have access to the development we are aiming at, the value-based approach, the commitments to the international networks, the many opportunities to inspire others and offer leadership – all of this and more are special advantages of ours that we should be proud of and use for these purposes.

83. We easily get fixated with what is wrong or what can go wrong, which definitely is understandable, but we do so without seeing the beauty and the blessings of the lives we have together. There are even more signs of hope, of positive development in the world, than we have ever had, and this must not be ignored. There are more people above the level of extreme poverty than before, there is a higher percentage of children in the world receiving education than ever, there is more access to health services than ever, there are more people elevated from poverty over the last decades than before, and there are fewer wars between nations than for many years. There are real results of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) up to 2015.

84. In a seminar on how churches and other actors from the labour movement can work together to pursue the SDGs, the general director of ILO, Guy Raider, said we are facing two types of crises in the world today. The crisis related to development, inequalities, unemployment, social injustice, education, health, and so on, are well documented and are addressed in different ways by the UN and its agencies. But there is also another type of crisis, which he called a crisis of values. The diminishing role of values, even the absence of the understanding of the need for them, he finds very worrying: “To speak about solidarity in some circles where the market and the market economy is highly regarded, gives me a feeling like swearing in the church.”

85. I think this shows that it is sometimes others, more than we ourselves, who see the enormous potential to address the urgent needs of our times within our value-based communities and common efforts in the ecumenical movement. We are not just looking at the landscapes, or moving in them, we are shaping them and cultivating them in so many different ways. We have to acknowledge our own role, without becoming self-occupied or self-sufficient. The attitude that corresponds to hope is both courage and gentleness, knowing that we are “called out of darkness into his marvellous light” (1 Peter 5:5 and 2:9).

86. *Diakonia* is a word we should use more and be more proud of. This is the service of the church, and it is something we are now engaging with afresh with many partners, expressed in our advocacy for justice and peace, our ministry to the needy, as well as in our daily witness. Together with ACT Alliance we are exploring the ecumenical meaning of and commitment to *diakonia,* finding new ways to demonstrate the inclusiveness of all, the service of the local churches, and the international initiatives as our common calling.

87. Churches with their many partners have been involved in diaconal ministry since the time of the apostles, often long before other parts of society or the states. We are grateful for instruments like ACT Alliance in the ecumenical family to provide resources and capacity to increase international and ecumenical *diakonia* and the ability to be part of joint projects. Developing human resources and

capacities in the churches for work related to health, development, and other areas is a very strategic part also of our common efforts in the coming years. We are committed to a stronger cooperation with ACT Alliance, and we have a comprehensive initiative for following up a consultation in Malawi in 2014 in this respect.

88. In this meeting we are invited to approve a pastoral letter together to our churches. This is a proposal to celebrate the achievement of the last ten years of common efforts to build HIV/AIDS friendly churches and to break the stigma and end the exclusion that are so destructive and even dangerous. It is also a call and a commitment to continue this work together. The work of EHAIA and of EAA on HIV and AIDs are now both ecumenical initiatives under the WCC's stewardship, and we are thereby committing ourselves to continue the efforts to end this pandemic and to address the many attitudes that are obstacles to do so. This work has brought so much hope to those in need of another perspective than that of the disease for their lives. The ecumenical endeavours have made a lot of difference to many. The contributions from faith-based actors are now seen as one of the most strategic ways to address HIV and AIDS, strengthening the knowledge and the support in the communities to make the changes that can stop this disease.

Conclusion: The Way Forward

89. The challenge before us, friends, is to continue to move together, without fear, with clear motivation in our living hope. We must have the role of being the promoter of relations, also of quality of relations, with all people of good will who will share our aspirations for building and sharing hope.

90. As sisters and brothers in the ecumenical family, we must be willing to continue to learn from one another about the challenges in our landscapes, also in our own, when we do not see them clearly ourselves.

91. We must be willing to address the real and greatest challenges for us as humanity. Are we the sign of the one humanity God has called us to be? Are we showing that we are able to live with our basic identities as human beings and as Christians, embracing the differences we have in parts of our lives, pursuing a multifaceted fellowship with courage and real commitment to justice and peace? Are we ready to not be the great provider of funds but instead to mobilize resources to be stewarded, shared, and used together in the ecumenical family?

92. Pilgrimage in whatever form – physical, spiritual, mental – must, after our meeting here in Trondheim, always challenge us to a Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace, always seeking the best, in hope.

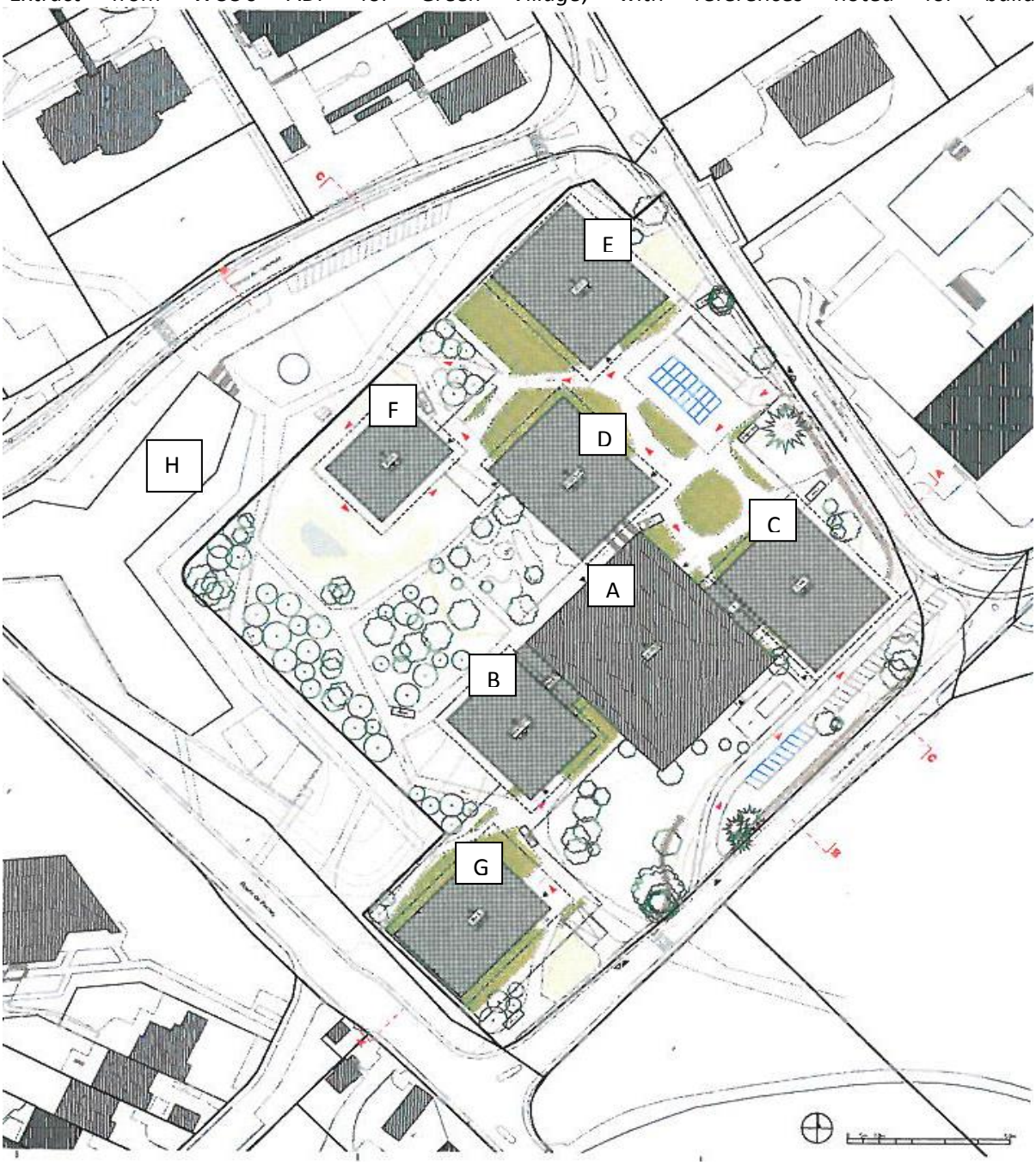
93. We continue to pray and work for the kingdom of God and God's will to be present among us here in our common home, the earth. We are pilgrims called to see, to assess, to move. We do so in the name of our God, the Father, our creator and sustainer; and of the Son, our liberator and saviour, the crucified and resurrected Jesus Christ who calls us to follow him; and of the Holy Spirit, giver of life and who creates gifts of joy in communion, a life to be nurtured and shared in all landscapes in this world, our common home. And so let us pray:

> *God of life, together we give thanks for the living hope we are given.*
> *Give us the wisdom and the courage to give an account of this hope wherever you call us to be, in our pilgrimage for justice and peace!*

Real Estate Development Appendix

On 10 November 2014, the WCC's Area Development Plan (ADP) for *Green Village* was filed with the Geneva department of town planning. Nineteen months later, the ADP, which defines building volumes, the layout of the estate and access, together with the required environmental impact studies, remains under formal review by the responsible authorities. There is expectation that approval will be issued this year.

Extract from WCC's ADP for *Green Village*, with references noted for buildings



A: Offices and Chapel 4,245 sqm
B: Ecumenical Centre offices 7,935 sqm
C: Offices for WCC's tenants 12,640 sqm
D: Offices and commercial area 9,040 sqm
E: Offices 13,990 sqm
F: Apartments 6,010 sqm
G: Hotel-residence 7,840 sqm
Car park spaces: 572 spaces (per ADP version 21.4.16)

H: *Global Fund's headquarters*, on neighbouring plot; and now under construction

Authorities' formal review

Implenia, *LRS architectes*, and WCC have met regularly with state department representatives during the formal review process. During the review, and in addition to the points set out below, negotiations addressed the margin for manoeuvre in the final definition of the building outline; the approach to the *Brugger* garden during the building works; the positioning of pathways and easements; and points of precision were introduced into the plan's descriptive notes, in accordance with legal recommendations.

The process was delayed, however, by a belated start to the review within the state departments, and by the accumulated effect of two rounds of amendment in laws and regulations, which affected the ADP, and required that it be redrafted and resubmitted. The outline of the principal steps is set out below.

10.11.14 **ADP delivered**, with impact studies on environment, traffic and energy

18.03.15 Formal review began only four months later, and as a result authorities accepted to cover the costs of certain additional studies, which would otherwise not have been required, had the formal review been concluded before 12.7.15

to July 2015 Observations raised in the preliminary opinions received from different state departments were addressed; in particular, adjustment was made to building D's position and alignment to respect the actual position of the *Brugger* garden

12.7.15 **New regulations issued**, requiring resubmission of ADP and updated impact studies, to incorporate in particular:

- Assessment of buildings' exposure to risk of major accident (particularly for the hotel-residence, and related to chemical transport on nearby Route de Ferney)
- Soil analysis

In addition, the new law governing the ADP process, effective from July 2015, required a process of dialogue and consultation with direct neighbours, to include a local public meeting, presenting the project; as well as an update of the ADP layout.

11.1.16 **Updated ADP delivered,** with the required additional studies

27.1.16 Confirmation that **new regulations issued**, effective 23.12.15, would now be applicable. The regulations set new directives for car park spaces, and, as a result, required resubmission of an updated traffic impact study.

3.2.16 Public meeting in Grand-Saconnex, presenting the project to neighbours; questions concerned principally the potential traffic impact of the project.

21.4.16 **Updated ADP delivered,** with number of car park spaces reduced from 680 to 572, and required revisions to environmental and traffic study.

26.5.16 Meeting with transport department to respond to concerns and questions on the traffic impact study. Final number of car park spaces permissible remains under discussion, but may increase slightly from 572 spaces.

There is an expectation that the formal review may be concluded in July. The ADP would then be open to a period of public inquiry. Allowing for the time required to respond to observations, and for the period of review required by the Commune of Grand-Saconnex in the formal process, there remains the expectation that the ADP may be approved and adopted by the end of this year.

Building project timeline

The timeline reported at executive committee in July 2014 has been revised to reflect a delay of one year in obtaining the ADP compared with expectations at that time. A commercial transaction might therefore be anticipated at the end of 2017, rather than in 2016.

Completion dates, estimated and actual					
		Actual	Development contract signed 30.5.12	Reported at central committee Jul-14	Revised Jun-16
Phase	**Description**				
0	Preparatory: assessment of buildings	31.12.12	30.9.12		
1	Architects' competition	31.10.13	30.6.13		
	Delivery of ADP to Canton	30.11.14	*30.9.13**		
2	Canton & Conseil d'Etat adopt ADP *iterative phases*		30.9.14	1.1.16	31.12.16
3	Building permit adopted		30.9.15	31.12.16	31.12.17
4	Financial objective for sale defined		31.12.15	30.11.16	30.11.17
5	Commercialisation; investor designated		31.3.16	31.12.16	31.12.17
6	Delivery of building		31.3.18	31.12.18	31.12.19

*****Date not in development contract, but defined in the rules for the architects' competition as being 40 days after end of competition. Additional time was required because of State request to consider additional housing; and because of detailed traffic study required, given that the ADP includes more than 500 car park places.

Work conducted by executive committee, July 2014-November 2015

Executive committee received a report on the real estate development project at each meeting. In November 2015, finance sub-committee reviewed general reserve projections, and further to the sub-committee's recommendations, executive committee approved a transfer of CHF 800,000 to the *Designated Fund for the Building Project*, to ensure that annual interest at 1.3% on the loan of CHF 24 million, maturing and renewable in March 2017, may be covered well beyond that date. The *Fund*, backed by liquid assets, holds CHF 1.9 million in June 2016.

Financial profile of *Green Village*

The financial profile of the project was originally prepared in May 2012, before the the *Green Village* project was selected, but even before the heritage study and the project specification were finalised. A first update to the financial profile was shared by Implenia in April 2016. The update takes account of the following factors:

- requirement to preserve and renovate the main building, including the chapel (GFS 4,245m2, instead of 900m2 in original profile)
- the increased land utilisation ratio (from 1.7 to 1.81);
- market evolution with regard to rent in CHF/m2, and capitalisation ratios;
- residential building and hotel-residence; and
- the estimated cost profiles of the *Green Village* buildings.

Further developed in May 2016, the financial profiles present different options for WCC's own strategy. The steering committee will meet during central committee to discuss the approach and next steps, with

a view to clarifying the preferred strategy by the year end. The steering committee will share its observations with the finance policy committee at this meeting.

Other steps completed

An amendment to the notarial act confirming the increased land utilisation index of 1.87 on both of the neighbouring plots, subject to approved ADPs, was signed by the WCC on 28 September 2015, and subsequently by the State of Geneva. The amendment was delivered to the land registrar by the notary on 6 November 2015.

Following independent legal opinion obtained, WCC has granted certain easements to the State of Geneva, owner of the neighbouring plot, and to Credit Suisse Investment Funds (CSIF), beneficiary of a land lease from the State of Geneva, so that the latter may use its land most effectively, adding an attic level to the *Global Fund* building. In turn, the State of Geneva and CSIF have promised to grant the easements required by WCC for *Green Village*, subject to WCC obtaining the ADP and the future building permits. The notarial act was signed by WCC on 11 May 2016, and was delivered to the land registrar by the notary on 15 June 2016.

In relation to the construction site for the *Global Fund* building, opened on 2 November 2015

An agreement was signed on 30 October 2015 between Implenia and the WCC agreeing terms for the use of a margin of WCC's land during the *Global Fund* construction on the neighbouring plot, and defining the set-up of the construction site, including the continued functioning of the footpath from the Route de Ferney to the Salève wing.

On 8 October 2015, at our request, at an open meeting in the Ecumenical Centre, Implenia presented the timeline for the construction of the *Global Fund* building to WCC, related organisations and tenants. Regular information bulletins about the construction works are now being shared with staff, related organisations and tenants.

During the period November 2015-June 2016, the rental contract was renegotiated for one significant tenant, while one related organisation benefited for six months from temporary use of vacant office space less exposed to the construction works. In June 2016, excavation on the neighbouring site is completed, and the noise level experienced is quite minimal.

General Secretary's Visits and Meetings

Travel

Date	Place	Purpose
14-17 July 2014	South Africa	General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church of South Africa
8 September 2014	Antwerp, Belgium	Sant'Egidio community's 28th International Meeting of People and Religions
17-18 September 2014	Norway	• Rainforest Conference • Ministry of Foreign Affairs
19-23 September 2014	USA	Interfaith Climate Change Summit
9-10 October 2014	Russia	Visit with Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill
18-26 October 2014	Dominican Republic	ACT-Alliance Assembly
27 October 2014	United Kingdom	WCC-IJCIC Meeting
30 October-2 November 2014	Norway	Mission Conference
3 November 2014	Netherlands	Meeting of the CWC Secretaries
17-19 November 2014	USA	Meetings with UNICEF and other UN and governmental agencies
1-2 December 2014	Sweden	Stockholm (Sigtuna) Ecumenical Peace Building Consultation
3-10 December 2014	Japan	• Article 9 International Conference • Official visit to Japan • visit member churches and NCCJ
5-6 January 2015	Norway	Trondheim – visit 2016 central committee facilities, meet with city and church authorities.
9-12 March 2015	Palestine and Israel	LCC meeting and pilgrimage to the Holy Land
17-20 March 2015	Ukraine	Kiev- high level solidarity visit to Ukraine – meeting with church leaders and government authorities.
3-6 April 2015	Taiwan	• PCT 150 years commemoration ceremonies • Official visit to Taiwan
7-8 April 2015	Korea	Hanshin University 75th anniversary – conferring of honorary doctorate to the WCC General Secretary
13-14 April, 2015	Ethiopia	High level meeting of South Sudan church leaders
15 April 2015	Turkey	Official visit to His All Holiness The Ecumenical Patriarch BARTHOLOMEW
16 April 2015	Germany	Lübeck – Funeral service of Philip Potter, former WCC General Secretary
20-21 April 2015	Russia	Moscow – official visit to H.H. Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Kirill I
22-25 April 2015	Armenia	Yerevan – Official commemoration of the Centennial of the Armenian Genocide
28 April 2015	Italy	Rome - Vatican Consultation on Climate Change
5-9 May 2015	Washington, USA	• Meeting with World Bank President, Dr Jim Yong Kim • NCCCUSA Christian Unity Gathering • Preaching at Washington Cathedral at the Centennial Commemoration Worship of the Armenian Genocide

Date	Place	Purpose
3-7 June 2015	Germany	Stuttgart – Kirchentag
16-18 June 2015	Romania	Faith and Order Commission Meeting
23-24 June 2015	Rome, Italy	Joint Working Group with Roman Catholics Meeting
19-20 July 2015	Lebanon	Centennial Commemoration of the Armenian Genocide—Holy Muron ceremony
29-31 July 2015	Trondheim, Norway	Public event to address climate change and pilgrimage for climate change in anticipation of Paris
16 August 2015	Taizé, France	Speech at the 75th anniversary of the Taizé Community and commemoration of the life of the community's founder Brother Roger
24 August-8 September, 2015	Brazil, Colombia, Argentina, Chile	• Latin American Church Visits • Visits to Government officials including Presidents of Chile and of Colombia
9-11 September, 2015	Norway	Meeting with Ministry of Foreign Affairs -- Secretary General Chr. Strommen
19-20 September, 2015	Adilswil, Switzerland	Preaching at Adilswil Church
23-24 September, 2015	Herrnhut, Germany	EMW General Assembly
5-7 October, 2015	Finland	Meeting of the Permanent Committee for Consensus and Collaboration
13-14 October, 2015	Germany	CEC Pilgrimage Event
15-17 October, 2015	Greece – Crete and Athens	Solidarity visit related to the Refugee Crisis; meetings with Church of Greece
18-20 October, 2015	Greece - Athens	High Level Meeting on the Middle East hosted by the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs
21-22 October, 2015	London, UK	Meeting of the General Secretaries of the Christian World Communions
28-29 October, 2015	Munich, Germany	Consultation of Church Leaders on European Refugee Crisis
1-4 November, 2015	Albania	Global Christian Forum Consultation on Discrimination, Persecution and Martyrdom
November 24-26, 2015	Chennai, India	• Official visit to Church of South India • United and Uniting Churches meeting

Date	Place	Purpose
December 27-4, 2015	Paris, France	COP 21
December 8, 2015	Paris, France	COP 21 – High level meeting
December 14-15, 2015	Rome, Italy	Official visit to Sant'Egidio
December 15-17, 2015	London, United Kingdom	Meetings with: • Archbishop of Canterbury; • Bishop Angaelos, Coptic Orthodox Church • Archbishop Josiah Idowu-Fearon, General Secretary of the Anglican Communion
January 7-10, 2016	Helsinki, Finland	Conference on Systematic Theology – keynote lecture
January 20-22, 2016	Davos, Switzerland	World Economic Forum
February 8-13, 2016	Jerusalem and Beit Jala, Israel and Palestine	• Pilgrimage Reference Group • Sermon at launch of Seven Weeks for Water Lenten Campaign • official visits to member churches in Palestine/Israel • Inauguration of new JIC and EAPPI offices
February 17-18, 2016	Berlin, Germany	At the invitation of the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development - Meeting on Partners for Change: Religions and the 20130 Agenda for Sustainable Development -- keynote speaker
February 29-3 March, 2016	Bujumbura, Burundi	WCC – AACC -- High level solidarity visit- GS led the WCC delegation
April 5, 2016	Jerusalem, Israel	Attend EAPPI Core Group meeting
April 6, 2016	York, United Kingdom	Ebor lecture at York University
April 13-18, 2016	Washington DC, USA	• LCC meeting • Opening of Ecumenical Advocacy Days • Racial Justice Visit – beginning of journey
April 19-20, 2016	Atlanta, GA, USA	The Atlanta Summit of Churches in the USA and the Holy Land
May 3-5, 2016	Rome, Italy	Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace and ILO Global Seminar on "Sustainable development and the future of work in the context of the Jubilee of Mercy"
May 6, 2016	Halle, Germany	The Wider Outlook Works Festival, Reform festival – keynote speaker
May 23-24, 2016	Istanbul, Turkey	• World Humanitarian Forum • Meeting with His All Holiness Patriarch HH Bartholomeos and Metropolitan Gennadios • Meeting with Justin Forsyth - UNICEF new Deputy Executive Director

Date	Place	Purpose
June 7-11, 2016	Cape Town and Johannesburg, RSA	• Cape Town: Lunch with Archbishop Desmond Tutu • Johannesburg: Peace-building & Reconciliation Consultation: The Place of the Church
June 13-15, 2016	Wittenberg, Germany	LWF Pre-Council Meeting and opening of the Council meeting
June 19, 2016	Heraklion, Crete	Holy Liturgy of the Holy Orthodox Synod

Meetings in Switzerland

Date	Place	Purpose
1 August, 2014	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of His Holiness Pope Tawadros of the Coptic Orthodox Church
2 August, 2014	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Mr Luis Samacumbi from Evangelical Congregational Church in Angola
5 September, 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Msgr Milenge and delegation from Eglise du Christ au Congo
10 September, 2014	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Armenian Church representative in Geneva
10 September, 2015	Norway Mission	Meeting with Norway Ambassador to the UN - HE Steffen KONGSTAD
10 September, 2014	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Bishop Martin Lind, bishop of the Lutheran Church in Great Britain
10-12 September, 2014	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Church of Norway Delegation
12 September, 2014	Ecumenical Centre	Welcome new Bossey students
24 September, 2014	Ecumenical Centre	Meeting with EAA Leadership
25 September, 2014	Ecumenical Centre	Meeting with Mariah Levin, Senior Community Manager, Civil Society Global Leadership Fellow of the World Economic Forum
26 September, 2014	Ecumenical Centre	Meeting with Sudan Council of Churches GS and NCA
26 September, 2014	World Health Organization	Meeting with Dr Silberschmidt - WHO Deputy Director
26 September, 2014	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Church of Sweden delegation
29 September, 2014	Ecumenical Centre	Health and Healing Seminar
29 September, 2014	Geneva	Nansem Refugees Award
30 September, 2014	Geneva	Official visit of H.E. Thorhild Widvey, Norway Minister of Culture and delegation from Ministry of Culture and Church of Norway
1 October, 2014	Bossey Ec. Institute	Lunch with World Vision for World Day of Prayer

Date	Place	Purpose
1 October, 2014	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Jørn Lemvik, General Secretary DIGNY
1 October, 2014	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Bishop Lawson, Methodist Church Togo
2-3 October, 2014	Ecumenical Centre	Staff Planning Days
2 October, 2014	WHO	Meeting with Dr Fukuda, ADG for Health Security at WHO
2 October, 2014	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of HE Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, former head of the UN in Geneva and presently Head of the Secretariat of the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, Chairperson of the Senate of Kazakhstan and Kazakhsan Ambassador
6 October, 2014	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of OKR Detlev Knoche and Delegation from Protestant Church Hesse & Nassau
6 October, 2014	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Bishop Simo Peura, Bishop of Lapua and member of the WCC Executive Committee and delegation from FinnChurch Aid
15 October, 2014	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Rev. Christopher Ferguson, General Secretary WCRC
15 October	Ecumenical Centre	Meeting of New Financial Architecture Panel (Rev. Ferguson, Rev. Martin Junge GS LWF, Rev. Colin Cowen, GS Council for World Mission and WCC GS)
28-29 October, 2014	Ecumenical Centre	LCC Meeting
30 October	Ecumenical Centre	Meeting with Rev. Dr Susan Durber, Faith and Order Commission Moderator
2 November	Ecumenical Centre	Presentation of book *Never Bow to Racism* - Memoirs of Baldwin Sjollema
5 November	Ecumenical Centre	Meeting with World Vision Leadership
5 November	Ecumenical Centre	Meeting with Ms Wakil and Mr Azar of WSCF Middle East
6 November	Ecumenical Centre	Meeting with Rt. Rev. Father Housig Mardirossian, Ecumenical Offier Armenian Apostolic Church (Holy See of Cilicia)
11 November	Bossey Ec. Institute	Dinner with Reference Group on Human Sexuality
13 November	Geneva	Farewell dinner with Rev. Dr Guy Liagre, GS of CEC
14 November	Nigeria Mission	Visit to Ambassador S.E. M. Umunna Humphrey ORJIAKO
14 November	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Rev . Larry Miller, Global Christian Forum
14 November	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark Bishops and delegation
17 February 2015	Ecumenical Centre	CCIA Commission
18 February 2015	Bossey Ec. Institute	ETE Commission

3 March 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Lebanese Minister of Foreign Affairs and delegation – courtesy visit
5 March 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Mission 21 Director, Rev. Claudia Bandixen and colleagues
6 March 2015	Palais des Nations	Participate in Human Rights Council Panel Discussion on Climate Change
16 March 2015	Ecumenical Institute Bossey	CWME Commission
23 March 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Eritrean Bishops
25 March 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Bishops of Protestant Church in Hesse and Nassau
24-27 March 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Staff Planning Days
17 April 2015	Ecumenical Centre	SLG retreat
20 April 2015	Intercontinental Hotel	Dinner with Ambassador Knut Vollebaek
27 April 2015	Ecumenical Centre	A prayer service paying tribute to the Ethiopian Christians killed by the Islamic State mid-April organized by the WCC and the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church.
28 April-1 May 2015	Bossey Ec. Institute	Ecumenical Officers Network
30 April 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Irish School of Ecumenics
30 April 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Rev. Larry Miller, Global Christian Forum
12 May 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Meeting with Ms Beris Gwynne, Director World Vision International
18 May 2015	Ecumenical Centre and Bossey Ec. Institute	• Ceremony celebrating the life and ministry of former WCC General Secretary, Rev. Dr Philip Potter • Dinner with Bishop Bärbel Wartenberg-Potter and select group of friends of the Potters plus WCC GS staff.
20 May 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Courtesy Visit of new Focolare leadership – Marie and Diego and delegation
19-20 May 2015	Bossey Ec. Institute	Working Together Meeting
21-22 May 2015	Bossey Ec. Institute	Strategic Ecumenical Forum
21 May 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Address meeting on The Future of Faith based health care provision
24-26 May 2015	Bossey Ec. Institute	Syria Inter-Community Consultation – meeting with UN Special Envoy for Syria, Mr Staffan de Mistura
26 May 2015	Ecumenical Centre	WSCF interim coordinator /Centennial Fund
27 May 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Address ECLOF Board Meeting
27-29 May 2015	Ecumenical Centre	International Conference on Peace and Security in the Democratic Republic of Congo

17 June 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Bishop Munib Younan, ELCJHL, Jerusalem
22 June 2015	Ecumenical Centre	the Finn Church Aid delegation
24 August 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Meeting with Amnesty International GS - Salil Shetty
15-17 September 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Norwegian Christian Council
15 September 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Ambassador Moussa from Egypt to discuss visit of the Grand Imam in
16 September 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Visit Maria Santos Pais - UN SRSG on Violence against Children
16 September 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Bishop Kakule MOLO from DRC
17 September 2015	Villa Rigot (near UN)	Inauguration of Nelson Mandela monument
18 September 2015	Ecumenical Centre	WCC – UNICEF signing of partnership
25 September 2015	Ecumenical Centre	All Staff Meeting
26-28 September 2015	Bossey Ec. Institute	Meeting Nigeria Interreligious Monitoring Centre
28-30 September 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Meeting of the WCC Leadership
28 September 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Cecilia Serin and Silvia Magnoni, World Economic Forum
30 September 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Rev. Yusuf Wushishi, GS of Christian Council Nigeria
8 October 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Presentation of Global Fund building project to all Ecumenical Centre staff
26-29 October 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Norway Cathedral Deans
9 November 2015	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of H.E. Mr Amr RAMADAN, Ambassador of Egypt to the UN
November 19, 2015	Ecumenical Centre	WCC-UNICEF – High level seminar on Children's rights
December 10, 2015	Delegates Restaurant at Palais des Nations	Farewell Reception for S. African Ambassador Minty
December 18, 2015	Château de Bossey	Year-end staff dinner
January 11, 2016	Morning: Ecumenical Centre followed by evening dinner: downtown	Visit of H.E. Archbishop Dr Vicken Aykazian and representatives of the Hassib Sabbagh Foundation
January 12, 2016	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Maria Wienken Diego Goller, Focolare representatives from Rome (Centru Uno)

January 12 and 13, 2016	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Prof. Jürgen Moltmann to the Ecumenical Centre – seminar with staff and public lecture in conjunction with presentation of his book, *The Living God and the Fullness of Life*
January 13, 2016	Ecumenical Centre	Post Holidays Midday Prayers and WCC Staff Lunch
January 14, 2016	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of His Eminence Archbishop Job, new Geneva representative of the Ecumenical Patriarchate
January 14, 2016	Ecumenical Centre	Ambassador Thomas Hauff, Norwegian Embassy
January 15, 2016	RC Mission	Ceremony with lecture by GS
January 18-19, 2016	Ecumenical Centre	High Level Conference on the Refugees Crisis organised by the World Council of Churches (WCC) in cooperation with UNICEF, the UN Children's Fund; UNFPA, the UN Population Fund; and UNHCR, the office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.
January 25, 2016	St Nicolas de Fluë	Interreligious Service
January 26, 2016	Château de Bossey	Dinner with Orthodox religious leaders
January 27, 2016	Bossey Ec. Institute	Graduation Ceremony
January 28, 2016	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Mr Singer - CEO World Jewish Congress and delegation
February 2, 2016	Ecumenical Centre	Delegation of Presbyterian Church of Taiwan
February 2, 2016	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Mr Bernard Du Pasquier, new GS of Bread for All
February 3, 2016	Ecumenical Centre	Meeting with representatives of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue.
February 8, 2016	Ecumenical Centre	ACT Alliance-Caritas Internationalis-LWF-WCC strategic meeting,
February 19, 2016	Ecumenical Centre	Visit and lunch with Bishop Emeritus Gunnar Stalsett
March 8-11, 2016	Ecumenical Centre	CCIA Commission
March 9, 2016	Ecumenical Centre	Inauguration of Amity Foundation office at the Ecumenical Centre

March 11, 2016	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Fr Heikki Huttunen, CEC General Secretary
March 12, 2016	Ecumenical Centre	Cyprus peace talks delegation
March 12, 2016	Ecumenical Centre	Meeting with Office of the Syria Special Envoy
March 14-17, 2016	Ecumenical Centre	Staff Planning Days meetings
March 30, 2016	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Peter Mandaville, Office of Religion & Global Affairs (S/RGA) Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of State
April 11, 2016	Ecumenical Centre	JWG RCC WCC executive
April 26, 2016	Ecumenical Centre	Meeting with the EC General Secretaries – M. Junge (LWF) and J. Nduna (ACT-A)
April 26, 2016	Ecumenical Centre	Visit of Dr Ali N. AWAD, President of the International Center for Strategic Researches and Information
April 27, 2016	Ecumenical Centre	H.E. Archbishop Ivan Jurkovic, new Ambassador and Permanent Representative, Nonce Apostolico
April 27, 2016	Ecumenical Centre	EAA / EHAI steering groups
April 28, 2016	Bossey Ec. Institute	United Bible Societies/WCC Meeting
May 2, 2016	Ecumenical Centre	Meeting with Jewish religious leaders
May 2, 2016	Ecumenical Centre	Mr Prakash Goossens, International Advocate of the NGO Fracarita International (Brothers of Charity
May 2, 2016	Ecumenical Centre	Short meeting with Cardinal Kurt Koch (visiting LWF)
May 2, 2016	Ecumenical Centre	Meeting with Dr Henk Jochemsen, Chair of the International reference group WCC-EAA
May 9, 2016	Palais des Nations	United Nations working group on nuclear weapons – read statement
May 12, 2016	Ecumenical Centre	Meeting with Dr Obiore Ike and Dr Christoph Stückelberger, incoming General Secretary GlobeEthics and current General Secretary

May 19, 2016	Ecumenical Centre	Meeting with WSCF leadership
May 19, 2016	Bossey Ec. Institute	Meeting followed by dinner with Mr Staffan de Mistura, UN Special Envoy to Syria and participants of meeting on Syria
May 20, 2016	Bossey Ec. Institute	WCC- World Evangelical Alliance meeting
May 25, 2016	Ecumenical Centre	Address Global Public Health meeting
May 26, 2016	Israeli Mission to the UN	Meeting with Israel's charge d'affaires
May 26-27, 2016	Bossey Ec. Institute	Round Table meeting
May 30-June 2, 2016	Ecumenical Centre and Bossey Ec. Institute	Visit of Oslo Bishop Emeritus Andreas Aarflot
June 5,2016	Lutheran Church in Geneva	Address jubilee church building Lutheran Church in Geneva celebration

APPENDIX III List of Participants

Leadership of the Central Committee

Dr Agnes Abuom	Anglican Church of Kenya
H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima	Ecumenical Patriarchate
Bishop Dr Mary Ann Swenson	United Methodist Church
Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit	World Council of Churches

Presidents

Rev. Dr Sang Chang	Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea
The Rt. Rev. Mark MacDonald	Anglican Church of Canada
Rev. Gloria Ulloa Alvarado	Iglesia Presbiteriana de Colombia
Prof. Dr Mary Anne Plaatjies Van Huffel	Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa
Archbishop Emeritus Dr Anders Wejryd	Church of Sweden

Members

Bishop Alan Francis Abernethy	Church of Ireland
Mr Joyanta Adhikari	Bangladesh Baptist Church Sangha
Very Rev. Dr Artur Aleksiejuk	Polish Autocephalous Orthodox Church
Rev. Cora Luisa Antonio Matamoros	Iglesia Morava en Nicaragua
Rt Rev. Dr Festus Ambe Asana	Presbyterian Church in Cameroon
Most Rev. Dr Phillip Aspinall	Anglican Church of Australia
Ms Kirsten Auken	Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark
Dr Abba Haile Mariam Melese Ayenew	Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church
H.E. Archbishop Dr Vicken Aykazian	Armenian Apostolic Church (Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin)
Rev. Dr Samson Olasupo Adeniyi Ayokunle	Nigerian Baptist Convention
Bishop Samuel Robert Azariah	Church of Pakistan
Rev. Dr Hyunju Bae	Presbyterian Church of Korea
H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Bishoy of Damietta	Coptic Orthodox Church
Bishop Petra Bosse-Huber	Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland
Rev. Marianne Brekken	Church of Norway
Bishop Eva Brunne	Church of Sweden
Rev. Dr Sofia Camnerin	Uniting Church in Sweden
Rt Rev. Dhiloraj Ranjit Canagasabey	Church of Ceylon
Rev. Prof. Dr Yang-En Cheng	Presbyterian Church in Taiwan
Rev. Augusto Chipesse	Igreja Evangélica Congregacional em Angola
Very Rev. Ray Coster	Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand
Mrs Ana María Velilla De Medio	Iglesia Evangélica de los Discipulos de Cristo
Rev. Dr Thomas De Vries	Reformed Church in America
Ms Paula Marie Der Matoian	Armenian Apostolic Church (Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin)
Bishop Sally Dyck	United Methodist Church
H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Elpidophoros of Bursa	Ecumenical Patriarchate

Rev. Prof. Dr Fernando Enns	Vereinigung der Deutschen Mennonitengemeinden
Ms Emily Evans	Uniting Church in Australia
Mrs Celina Falk	Church of Sweden
Rev. Daniel Angel Favaro	Iglesia Evangélica Metodista Argentina
Rev. Dr Paul Gardner	Moravian Church in Jamaica
Mrs Anne Glynn-Mackoul	Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East
Archpriest Mikhail Goundiaev	Russian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate)
Bishop Dr Martin Hermann Hein	Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland
Rev. Anne Heitmann	Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland
Rev. Dr Martin Hirzel	Schweizerischer Evangelischer Kirchenbund
Madame Conforte Houenou Bonou	Eglise protestante méthodiste du Bénin
Rev. Dr Henriette Hutabarat-Lebang	Gereja Toraja
Rev. Fr Stefan Igumnov	Russian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate)
Dr Theodora Issa	Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East
Dr Andrej Jeftić	Serbian Orthodox Church
Rev. Karl Johnson	Jamaica Baptist Union
Rev. Baoping Kan	China Christian Council
Mr Thomas Hyeono Kang	Igreja Evangélica de Confissão Luterana no Brasil
Bishop Yona Mwesigwa Katoneene	Church of Uganda
H.B. Patriarch Jean Baudouin Kayuwa	Eglise du Christ - Lumière du Saint Esprit
The V. Rev. Dr Jack Khalil	Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East
Prof. Dr Marina Kolovopoulou	Church of Greece
Ms Judith Königsdörfer	Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland
Rev. Martina Viktorie Kopecká	Czechoslovak Hussite Church
Prof. Dr Dimitra Koukoura	Ecumenical Patriarchate
Rev. Kristi	Gereja-Gereja Kristen Jawa (GKJ)
H.E. Metropolitan Serafim Kykotis	Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa
Rev. Everdith Yaritza Landrau	Presbyterian Church (USA)
Mrs Elenor I. Lawrence	Church in the Province of the West Indies
Rév. Nadou-Madje Martine Grace Lawson-Late Zinsou	Eglise méthodiste du Togo
Rev. Dr Manhong Lin	China Christian Council
Bishop Dr Alex Gehaz Malasusa	Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania
Ms Tutai Mauke	Cook Islands Christian Church
Mrs Marceline Mbingasani Maluavanga	Église du Christ au Congo - Communauté baptiste du Congo
Mr Yilikal Shiferaw Messelu	Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church
Mrs Klaudija Milosevski	Serbian Orthodox Church
Anne Mitchell	Canadian Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
Mr Philip Modayil Mani	Church of South India
Rev. Sarah Moore	United Reformed Church
Rev. Georges Mourad	National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon

Rev. Sayam Muangsak	Church of Christ in Thailand
Rev. Canon Dr Leslie Nathaniel	Church of England
Rev. Dr Wakseyoum Idosa Negeri	Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus
Mrs Margarita Nelyubova	Russian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate)
H.E. Metropolitan Zachariah Mar Nicholovos	Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church
H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Nifon of Targoviste	Romanian Orthodox Church
Rev. Prof. Dr Renta Nishihara	Anglican Church in Japan
Mr Stanley Noffsinger	Church of the Brethren
Bishop Dr Chibuzo Raphael Opoko	Methodist Church Nigeria
Rev. Yam Kho Pau	Myanmar Baptist Convention
Mr Carlos Peña	Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Bishop Sofie Petersen	Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark
Bishop Simo Peura	Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland
Very Rev. Archimandrite Philaret	Russian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate)
Bishop Dr Isaac Mar Philoxenos	Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar
Rev. Prof. Dr Jerry Pillay	Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa
Ms Teny Pirri-Simonian	Armenian Apostolic Church (Holy See of Cilicia)
Rev. Dr Staccato Powell	African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church
Ms Roma Ann Nisha Prodhan	Church of North India
Dr Audeh B. Quawas	Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem
Dr Endor Modeste Rakoto	Eglise luthérienne malgache
Padi Rex R. B. Reyes, Jr.	Episcopal Church in the Philippines
Dr Ann K. Riggs	Religious Society of Friends: Friends General Conference
Rev. Dr Sarah Rogers	Church in Wales
H.E. Metropolitan Eustathius Matta Roham	Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East
Rev. Dr Rangarirai Rutoro	Reformed Church in Zimbabwe
Rev. Canon Aida Consuelo Sanchez-Navarro	The Episcopal Church
Rev. Emma Essie Dzoe Sepah	Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana
Bishop Dr Daniel Jensen Seyenkulo	Lutheran Church in Liberia
Rev. Silishebo Silishebo	United Church of Zambia
Rev. Miriam Spies	United Church of Canada
Prof. Dr Georges Tamer	Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East
Rt Rev. Arnold C. Temple	Methodist Church Sierra Leone
Rev. Dr June Totten	American Baptist Churches in the USA
Ms Sonia Tziovanni	Church of Cyprus
The Most Rev. Emmanuel Josiah Udofia	The African Church
Rev. Karin van den Broeke	Protestant Church in the Netherlands
Archbishop Urmas Viilma	Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church
Mr Samuel Nderi Wairimu	Presbyterian Church of East Africa
Rev. Dr Angelique Walker-Smith	National Baptist Convention USA, Inc.
Rev. Dr Sharon Watkins	Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States
Ms Miriam Jane Weibye	Church of Scotland

Bishop John F. White	African Methodist Episcopal Church
Rev. Dr Kee Sing Wong	Methodist Church in Malaysia
Dr Fransina Yoteni	Gereja Kristen Injili Di Tanah Papua (GKITP)
H.G. Bishop Youanes	Coptic Orthodox Church

Substitutes

Ms Talvikki Ahonen	Prof. Dr Pekka Metso	Orthodox Church of Finland
Fr Iakovos Andriopoulos	H.E. Metropolitan Gabriel of Nea Ionia and Filadelfia	Church of Greece
Rev. Dr Cornelia Füllkrug-Weitzel	Bishop Dr Martin Hermann Hein	Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland
Pfarrer Ioan Livius Jebelean	Archbishop Dr Joris Vercammen	Old-Catholic Church in the Netherlands
Rev. Elder Eveni Mamoe Jr.	Rev. Elder Leatulagi T. Faalevao	Congregational Christian Church in American Samoa
Very Rev. Fr. Housig Mardirossian	H.E. Archbishop Dr Nareg Alemezian	Armenian Apostolic Church (Holy See of Cilicia)
Dr Marie-Christine Michau	Rev. Laurent Schlumberger	Eglise protestante unie de France
Ms Jennifer Mosher	H.G. Bishop Alexander of Toledo and the Bulgarian Diocese	Orthodox Church in America
Rev. Dr Binsar Jonathan Pakpahan	Rev. Willem T.P. Simarmata	Huria Kristen Batak Protestan (HKBP)
Fr Gregory Pelushi	H.E. Metropolitan Nikkola of Fier	Orthodox Autocephalous Church of Albania
Rev. François Pihaatae	Rev. Taaroanui Maraea	Église protestante Maohi
Ms Elena Speranskaya	Fr Alexander Vasyutin	Russian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate)
Rev. Karen Georgia Antoinette Thompson	Rev. Geoffrey A. Black	United Church of Christ

Replacements

Rev. Michel Charbonnier	Ms Valeria Fornerone	Waldensian Church
Rev. M. A. Daniel	Bishop Taranath Sagar	Methodist Church in India
Rt Revd Dr Robert Innes	Rt Rev. Dr Peter Forster	Church of England
Mrs Elisabeth Krause-Vilmar	Ms Schulamit Kriener	Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland
Ms Sheila Salomo	Mr Tony Waworuntu	Gereja Protestan di Indonesia Bagian Barat (GPIB)
Rev. Robina Winbush	Rev. Gradye Parsons	Presbyterian Church (USA)

Apologies

Rev. Abednego Adinugroho	Gereja Kristen Jawi Wetan (GKJW)
H.E. Archbishop Dr Nareg Alemezian	Armenian Apostolic Church (Holy See of Cilicia)
H.G. Bishop Alexander of Toledo and the Bulgarian Diocese	Orthodox Church in America

Rev. Dr Carroll A. Baltimore	Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc.
Rev. Geoffrey A. Black	United Church of Christ
Bishop Dr Gustáv Bölcskei	Reformed Church in Hungary
Dr Ulysses Burley III	Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Rev. Elder Leatulagi T. Faalevao	Congregational Christian Church in American Samoa
Ms Valeria Fornerone	Waldensian Church
Rt Rev. Dr Peter Forster	Church of England
H.E. Metropolitan Gabriel of Nea Ionia and Filadelfia	Church of Greece
H.G. Bishop Irinej of Australia and New Zealand	Serbian Orthodox Church
H.B. Patriarch John X	Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East
Mrs Tagolyn Kabekabe	Church of Melanesia
Rev. Dr Micheline Kamba Kasongo	Église du Christ au Congo - Communauté presbytérienne de Kinshasa
H.H. Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II	Armenian Apostolic Church (Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin)
Ms Cynthia Kent	United Methodist Church
Ms Schulamit Kriener	Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland
Mrs Jesca Bireri Laki Lukudu	Episcopal Church of South Sudan and Sudan
Rev. Tafue M. Lusama	Ekalesia Kelisiano Tuvalu
Rev. Taaroanui Maraea	Église protestante Maohi
Prof. Dr Pekka Metso	Orthodox Church of Finland
Rev. Jeanne Françoise Ndimubakunzi	Eglise anglicane du Burundi
H.E. Metropolitan Nikkola of Fier	Orthodox Autocephalous Church of Albania
Rev. Gradye Parsons	Presbyterian Church (USA)
Mag. Elisabeth Pausz	Evangelische Kirche A. und H.B. in Österreich
Rev. Dr Meleana Maimoa Puloka	Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga (Methodist Church in Tonga)
Archbishop Onesphore Rwaje	Province de l'Eglise anglicane du Rwanda
Ms Sheila Salomo	Gereja Protestan di Indonesia Bagian Barat (GPIB)
Rev. Laurent Schlumberger	Eglise protestante unie de France
Rev. Willem T.P. Simarmata	Huria Kristen Batak Protestan (HKBP)
Ms Iveta Starcová	Orthodox Church in the Czech Lands and Slovakia
Rev. Dr Michael Tita	Romanian Orthodox Church
H.E. Metropolitan Dr Vasilios of Constantia - Ammochostos	Church of Cyprus
Archbishop Dr Joris Vercammen	Old-Catholic Church in the Netherlands

Moderators of Commissions and Advisory Groups

Rev. Frank Chikane	Commission of the Churches on International Affairs
Metropolitan Dr Mor Geevarghese Coorilos	Commission on World Mission and Evangelism
Rev. Dr Susan Durber	Faith and Order Commission
Dr Emily Welty	Commission of the Churches in International Affairs

Advisors

Ms Berit Hagen Agøy	Church of Norway
Ms Helen Akerman	Uniting Church in Sweden
Dr Gail Allan	United Church of Canada
Rev. Liberato C. Bautista	General Board of Church and Society United Methodist Church
Rev. Maria Bergstrand	Church of Sweden
Dr Jeanette L. Bouknight	Christian Methodist Episcopal Church
Rev. Fr Andrzej Choromanski	Roman Catholic Church
Rt Rev. Dr Ayokunle Dawodu	The African Church
Rev. Susanne Erlecke	Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland
Mrs Ida Hennerdal	Uniting Church in Sweden
Rev. Dr Harold D. Hunter	International Pentecostal Holiness Church
Rev. Jens-Petter Johnsen	Church of Norway
Very Rev. Dr Sheilagh Margaret Kesting	Church of Scotland
Rev. Dr Larry Miller	Global Christian Forum
Rev. Kristin Molander	Church of Sweden
Rev. Jennie Nordin	Church of Sweden
Mr Birger Nygaard	Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark
Rev. Prof. Kenneth R. Ross	Church of Scotland
Rev. Margaret Rollins Rose	The Episcopal Church
Prof. Dr Thomas Schirrmacher	World Evangelical Alliance
Bishop Teresa Snorton	Christian Methodist Episcopal Church
Rev. Paul (Seung Un) Tché	Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States
Rev. Einar Tjelle	Church of Norway
H.E. Ambassador Knut Vollebæk	Church of Norway
Bishop B. Michael Watson	United Methodist Church

Advisors – Christian World Communions

Bishop Ivan Manuel Abrahams	World Methodist Council
Mr Adrian Butcher	Anglican Communion
Rev. Christopher Ferguson	World Communion of Reformed Churches
Rev. Nicta Lubaale Makiika	Organization of African Instituted Churches
Mr Kees Nieuwerth	Friends World Committee for Consultation
Rev. Terrie Robinson	Anglican Communion

Advisors – Consensus

Ms Tara Tautari	Methodist Church of New Zealand

Advisors – EDAN

Ms Torill Edøy	Church of Norway

Advisors – International Ecumenical Organizations

Rev. Volker Martin Dally	United Evangelical Mission – UEM

Ms Georgine Kengne Djeutane	World Student Christian Federation (WSCF)
Mrs Corinna Harbig	World Day of Prayer
Mr Patrick Hynes	Oikocredit International
Mr Areej Rashid	World Association for Christian Communication
Ms Jurgette Nectarinia Rocas	World Student Christian Federation (WSCF)

Advisors – National Councils of Churches

Dr Nicola Brady	Irish Council of Churches
Rev. Peter Colwell	Churches Together in Britain and Ireland
Dr Elisabeth Dieckmann	Council of Churches in Germany (ACK)
Rev. Tore Johnsen	Church of Norway
Rev. Dr Olle Kristenson	Christian Council of Sweden
Mr Zablon Isaac Malenge	National Council of Churches of Kenya
Bishop Mthanjiswa Malusi Mpumlwana	South African Council of Churches
Rev. Kam Cheong Po	Hong Kong Christian Council
Rev. Dr Mari-Anna Pontinen	Finnish Ecumenical Council
Rev. Knut Refsdal	Christian Council of Norway
Ms Janet Scott	Churches Together in England (CTE)
Rev. Klaas van der Kamp	Council of Churches in the Netherlands
Rev. Karin Wiborn	Christian Council of Sweden

Advisors – New Member Church

Rev. Dr Gustav Claassen	Dutch Reformed Church
Rev. Alex Benson Maulana	Church of Central Africa Presbyterian
Rev. Dr Solomon Rongpi	Council of Baptist Churches in North East India
Rev. Cornelis Janse van Rensburg	Dutch Reformed Church

Advisors – Regional Ecumenical Organizations

Dr Mathews George	Christian Conference of Asia
Fr Heikki Huttunen	Conference of European Churches
Rev. Dr André Karamaga	All Africa Conference of Churches
Rev. Milton Marino Mejía Camargo	Consejo Latinoamericano de Iglesias (CLAI)

Advisors – Specialized Ministries

Rev. Christoph Anders	Evangelisches Missionswerk in Deutschland
Dr Rebecca Duerst	Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Dr Mohamed Elsanousi	Finn Church Aid
Mr Robert H. Granke	Canadian Lutheran World Relief
Mrs Anne-Marie Helland	Norwegian Church Aid
Ms Kerstin Kollander	Church of Sweden
Rev. John L. McCullough	Church World Service
Dr John Nduna	ACT Alliance
Ms Harriett Jane Olson	United Methodist Women

Rev. Dr Seppo Tapani Rissanen	Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission (FELM)

Advisors - Youth

Rev. Christopher Euphfa	Moravian Church in Jamaica
Mr Mena Shawky Nassif Habeb	Coptic Orthodox Church
Ms Aleshia Johnson	Anglican Church of Canada
Ms Hanbeet Rhee	Presbyterian Church of Korea
Ms Larissa Ribeiro de Aguiar Garcia	Igreja Metodista no Brasil

Guests

Archpriest Mykolay Danylevytch	Ukrainian Orthodox Church
Rev. Wesley Granberg-Michaelson	Global Christian Forum
Dr David Han	Global Christian Forum
Rev. Dr Richard Howell	Global Christian Forum
Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia	Methodist Church in Kenya
H.E. Luka Archbishop of Zaporizhia and Melitopol	Ukrainian Orthodox Church
Father Pierre Martinot Lagarde	International Labour Organization
Dr Jean-Daniel Plüss	Global Christian Forum

National Host Committee

Ms Hege Merete Andersen	Christian Council of Norway
Ms Ingeborg Dybvig	Church of Norway
Ms Beate Fagerli	Church of Norway
Rev. Ragnhild Jepsen	Church of Norway
Ms Gunn Karlsaune	Church of Norway
Ms Randi Langkaas	Church of Norway
Ms Susanne Lende	Church of Norway

Stewards

Ms Ingrid Mortensen Bjornstad	Church of Norway
Ms Klevisa Breshani	Albanian Church in Norway
Mr David Alejandro Caceres Del Castillo	Finland / El Salvador Lutheran Church
Ms Stine Olava Faksdal	The Norwegian Church
Ms Kathrine Fischer	Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark
Ms Emelie Caroline Hjert	Church of Sweden
Ms Iuliia Konvisarova	Orthodox Church of Finland
Ms Signe Randorff Larson	Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark
Mr Kristjan Lemmsalu	Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church
Ms Joyce Nampewo	Church of Uganda
Ms Laura Bjorg Petersen	Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark
Mr Mikko Juhani Salo	Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland
Ms Frida Sørensen	Church of Norway
Ms Mikaela Madelene Steffansson	Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland

Ms Viivi Matilda Törmànen	Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland
Mr Matias Uusisllta	Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland
Ms Katarina Väisänen	Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland

Appendix IV In Memoriam

Cardinal Roberto Tucci died in Rome in April 2014. He served as director of the Jesuit periodical, Civiltà Cattolica, from 1959 to 1973, and as Director General of Vatican Radio from 1973 to 1985. He was made a cardinal by Pope St. John Paul II on February 21, 2001. During the Second Vatican Council, he played a major role as a theological expert. He contributed to the final edition of the Pastoral Constitution Gaudium et spes. At the WCC fourth assembly (Uppsala 1968), he was one of the two Roman Catholics who addressed plenary sessions. In his address he put the agenda of the Joint Working Group in the light of the RCC's self-understanding in the modern world, as expressed in the sixteen documents of Vatican II, as well as in view of developments in the WCC and its member churches since the first assembly in Amsterdam in 1948.

On 31 May 2014 **Ms Margaret Rodgers** passed away at the age of 74. A prominent Deaconess and lay person in the Anglican Church of Australia, Ms Rodgers was joint President of the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) from 1995–2000 and member of CCA General Committee from 1990-1995; she was an Anglican representative of the National Council of Churches of Australia from 1994 to 2007 and participated in WCC meetings. Her passion for women and lay ministries gave vision and direction and led to many path-breaking decisions in the life and activities of the CCA. In January 2014, Rodgers was made a 'Member of the Order of Australia (AM),' for "significant service to the Anglican Church of Australia through governance and representational roles, and to ecumenical affairs."

Ms Frances Martin, Church of England, died in June 2014. She worked with the WCC Refugee Service (CICARWS) from 1966-1972 being responsible for refugee work, resettlement, integration and temporary camps. Following this assignment she returned to the UK after which she service in Africa, at the Anglican diocese of the Gambia and Rio Pongas in the bishop's office. She returned to service at the WCC in the 1980s as a consultant for the International Year for Disabled Persons, later as secretary for emergencies and then on evaluations and assessments of different refugee programmes of the Council.

Rev. Prof. Dr H. Russel Botman passed away unexpectedly in his sleep at the age of 60 on 27 June 2014. He was rector at Stellenbosch University, and was deeply involved in educational and ecumenical work throughout his life, including working with the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC), a predecessor of the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC). For the WARC Botman was co-chair of the International Reformed-Roman Catholic Dialogue from 1998 until 2006. He was also a consultant in the WARC's covenanting for justice process in the early 2000s, which contributed to the creation of the Accra Confession. He served as president of the South African Council of Churches from 2003 to 2007. He had a lifelong commitment to racial justice, justice in the economy, climate justice, gender justice and to inclusion of all God's people in the life of the church and the world. He received Princeton Theological Seminary's Abraham Kuyper Prize for Excellence in Theology and Public Life in April 2013. In March 2014, he was awarded an honorary doctorate by Hope College in Michigan for leadership in higher education and the Reformed church to promote a more just society for all South Africans. Botman also received honorary membership of the United Nations Association of South Africa for advancing the Millennium Development Goals.

Rev. Archie D. LeMone, Jr., ordained minister in Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc., and the American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A. passed away on 28 June 2014 after a brief illness, at home in Maryland, USA. He served as Division Assistant for the Home Mission Board of the American Baptist Churches in Valley Forge before being offered a staff position with the WCC. He worked at the WCC in Geneva first in the education and renewal unit and then as youth coordinator. After returning to the

USA, he was the Executive Director for Social Ministries of the Home Mission Board for the PNBC and then the Associate Director for Constituency Relationships, Public Policy Ministries for the Washington, D.C. office of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA.

Bishop Vinton Anderson, 92nd Bishop in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, died at the age of 86 on 9 July 2014**.** He was a distinguished pastor, writer, ecumenist, liturgist and leader in African Methodism and throughout the world. He provided leadership in liturgical renewal in the church and was known for his strong commitment to ministerial formation. Bishop Anderson served with distinction as the WCC resident for the North American region between the Canberra and Harare assemblies. In that capacity, he led the then US Conference of the World Council of Churches. Bishop Anderson had a strong commitment to ecumenical formation for younger generations. Thanks to the Bishop Vinton R. Anderson Fellowship which he established AME seminarians and young clergypersons can come to the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey, Switzerland to study ecumenical history and theology and live in an intentional ecumenical and multicultural community.

Rev. Dr Rodney Maynard Booth, United Church of Canada, died on 10 July 2014. He served as a congregational minister and director of communications for the UCC for almost 30 years. He then was Media Director/Executive Producer of UCTV with the National Division of Communication, till retirement in 1999. He also served as chairperson of the WCC Communicators' Network, worked for the WCC, providing resources and media/TV coverage from three WCC assemblies.

On 11 July 2014, **Ms Elenie Huszagh**, a long-time Chicago attorney and prominent lay member of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, passed away. She was president of the National Council of Churches, USA (NCCCUSA) from 2002 to 2003. She was the first Orthodox layperson and the first Orthodox woman to serve in the office, and only one of six laypersons to serve as president in the Council's history. She served her church in many capacities, giving leadership in the Archdiocesan Council and the Biennial Clergy-Laity Congresses. From 1994 to 1996 she served as a senior adviser to the late Archbishop Iakovos. Among her many commitments at the diocesan level, she was legal counsel for both the Chicago and the San Francisco Dioceses. In 1996, she was awarded the Medal of St. Paul, the highest honour that the Archdiocese bestows upon a layperson.

Rev. Rubem Alves, a Presbyterian theologian from Brazil, died at the age of 80 on Saturday 19 July 2014. Through the 1960s, Alves alternated between service as a Presbyterian parish pastor and study as a graduate researcher in theology. During the military dictatorship, he was listed as one of the pastors sought by the military and so left to pursue further study outside Brazil. He earned graduate degrees from Union Theological Seminary in New York City and Princeton Theological Seminary. In 1966 he became involved in seminars and conferences convened under the auspices of Church and Society in Latin America (ISAL) which was inspired following the WCC Conference on Church and Society held at Geneva. Through the WCC education office staffed by Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, ISAL and the WSCF, he became a figure well-known at international ecumenical conferences and symposia. This culminated in his 1979 presentation at the WCC Church and Society Conference on "Faith, Science, the Future", held at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge. Back home in Brazil he was instrumental in the process that led to the creation of the United Presbyterian Church of Brazil (IPU), now a member of the WCC. He is remembered as one of the great educational innovators who helped hone Christian social ethics in light of the theology of liberation, and helped shape the field of ecumenical formation in partnership with theological institutions in North and South, as well as programmes of the WCC, the World Student Christian Federation (WSCF) and SODEPAX, the ecumenical joint committee on society, development and peace that was co-sponsored by the WCC and the Roman Catholic Church.

Mr Martin Blöcher, North Elbian Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany, passed away on 23 July 2014 after a short illness at the age of 67. He served the Association for Protestant Missions and Churches in Germany (EMW) 1979-2010 and consulted for EMW on finance and organizational matters until his retirement. He was known for his ecumenical commitment, international experience and a generous heart for people and churches in need. He personally assisted the WCC general secretary in the plans for the re-development of the Ecumenical Centre and its surrounding property. The transformation of the Ecumenical Centre into a "green village" in the future will always remind us of Blöcher's important role in this project.

Mr Samuel Isaac died at the age of 72 in Chennai, India on 20 August 2014 following a stroke. Isaac served as deputy director of the WCC's former Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS). He served the WCC faithfully 1980-1996 and was known for his unrelenting honesty in analysing where both churches and societies went wrong in their actions and activities, especially in his outspoken critique of the churches' and goverment's role in the tragedy of Rwanda during the 1990's.

Prof. Dr Wolfhart Pannenberg (born in 1928) died on 4 September 2014. He was one of the most influential Protestant ecumenists in the 20th century. He taught in Wuppertal and Mainz and since 1967 at the University of Munich (Germany). From 1975-1991 he served on the Standing Commission of the Commission on Faith and Order of the World Council of Churches and was substantially involved in several studies of the commission.

Ms Ruud (Rudy) van Hoogevest passed away on 8 September 2014 at the age of 92 in Hilversum, the Netherlands. She was responsible for the WCC refugee service in Geneva 1975-1987. In 1948 she was part of the preparatory committee for the first Assembly of the WCC in Amsterdam and particularly responsible for the well-being of the youth delegation. Soon afterwards (1948-1949), she went to the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey and participated in one of the early courses on ecumenical issues given by Bossey's first director Hendrik Kraemer and Willem Visser 't Hooft. There she made many contacts which opened her eyes especially for the needs of refugees. As a result, she left for Austria to work as a volunteer and later as director of the World YWCA`s Austrian refugee training programmes. Following this assignment she continued to work for the World YWCA and YMCA's service to refugees in other parts of Europe, eventually working for the UNHCR. She is remembered her life in service to refugees as a great gift to the ecumenical movement.

Dr Francisco F. Feliciano died on 19 September 2014 in Manila, Philippines. In the 1970s he received a WCC scholarship to study in Germany at the Berliner Kirchenmusikschule and then continued to get his doctorate in composition from Yale, USA. He went on to become professor at the University of the Philippines and resident conductor of the Philippine Philharmonic. He was a co-founder of the Asian Institute for Liturgy and Music, the first institution in Asia committed to the cultivation and development of Asian liturgy and music. He became its director in 1980. He edited the Christian Conference of Asia's Hymnal Supplement I in 1981 and was one of the editors of the 1990 and 2000 editions of "Sound the Bamboo". He organized workshops for liturgy and music in the 1980s. In 2014 he was named a National Artist of the Philippines for Music. He is known for his hymns, liturgical music and choral and orchestral works. His song "Purihin an gating Diyos" (Praise God who gives us life) was sung during the morning prayers at the WCC Busan assembly.

Rev. David Philpot passed away in Edinburgh, Scotland after a short illness at the age of 84 in October 2014. Philpot was a committed ecumenist who served the ecumenical movement tirelessly and

faithfully, both in his work in Kenya and then later when he came to work at the WCC in 1981. As the executive secretary for scholarships, his contribution to ecumenical education was crucial in forming a generation of ecumenical leaders. Many church leaders have given testimony to how important it was to receive educational support from the WCC during the time of his service and how such a contribution shaped their own ecumenical formation. After his retirement Philpot continued to collaborate with WCC to support students studying in the United Kingdom. He will be remembered for his work ethic, his kindness, and compassion for all.

Mr James A. Chamunorwa Mutambirwa from Zimbabwe passed away at the age of 76 in October 2014 in Geneva, Switzerland. He served the WCC as consultant and programme secretary in the Programme to Combat Racism (1984-1985) and then as programme executive in 1991-1992. He authored and edited many publications including "From Cottesloe to Cape Town: the WCC visit to South Africa, October, 1991: challenges for the church in a post-apartheid South Africa."

Patriarch Kayuwa Tshibumbu wa Kapinga, died on 2 November 2014 in Mbuji Mayi, Democratic Republic of Congo at the age of 83. He was the head and legal representative of Church of Christ Light of the Holy Spirit. He was known for his leadership and strong voice for peace and justice in the DRC.

Dr David Robin Goodbourn, Baptist Union of Great Britain, passed away on 9 November 2014 at the age of 66. As a youth, he was active in the local Baptist students' society at Durham, becoming its president. This led to involvement in the national Baptist Students' Federation (BSF) which marked the beginning of a life-time of service in the church. He was active in various ecumenical networks including the Association of Centres of Adult Theological Education (ACATE) and the Ecumenical Association for Adult Education in Europe (EAEE). In 1999, David was appointed general secretary of the Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland shortly before it became Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, the first lay person to hold the office. In the latter period of his life, he became closely involved in the work of the WCC. As an ecumenical educator, he was invited to serve on the WCC's Commission on Education and Ecumenical Formation. He represented the British churches on the WCC central committee and from thence was appointed to the executive committee. He became moderator of the programme committee and also used his experience to assist the WCC in revising its governance procedures and processes.

Former Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA) director, **Mr Leopoldo J. Niilus** passed away at his home in Geenva on 9 February 2015. In 1969, Leopoldo, a Lutheran layperson, was invited by then WCC general secretary Eugene Carson Blake to Geneva as the new director of the CCIA to succeed the venerable O. Frederick Nolde who had served in that post since the Commission was formed in 1946. Under his leadership the CCIA became ever more directly engaged in ecumenical advocacy in support of churches in developing countries in the fields of human rights; militarism, peace and disarmament; and conflict resolution. In recognition of his personal leadership in the negotiations that led to the 1972 Addis Ababa Sudan peace agreement, the new Sudanese government decorated him with its Order of Two Niles (First Grade). After completing his term with the WCC, Niilus became director for International Ecumenical Relations of the Middle East Council of Churches based in Geneva from 1982 to 1995, and simultaneously from 1988 to 1995 he served as consultant to the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) in international affairs and human rights. In this latter capacity he played an active role in the negotiations to end the civil war in Guatemala and was a signatory as witness to the 1990 Oslo Peace Accords.

Rev. Dr James Massey, Church of North India, a pioneering Dalit theologian and former member of the Indian government's National Commission for Minorities, died in Patna, India on 2 March 2015. Dr Massey was a Dalit from the northern Indian state of Punjab. He served as the general secretary of the

Indian Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (ISPCK), a major publishing house, based in Old Delhi. He was the founder director of the ecumenical Centre for Dalit Studies in India started in New Delhi in 2001. Later in 2004 it was re-christened as Centre for Dalit/Subaltern Studies (CDS) to include other marginalized communities including the minorities within the scope of its activities. He worked for inter-faith dialogue in the Indian context with special interest in Sikh religion. For his work in Sikh religion he was awarded Doctor of Philosophy by Johann Wolfgang Goethe-University, Frankfurt, Germany, and again Post-Doctoral Academic Degree (Habilitation) in the field of "Religious Studies" by the same University. He translated the Bible into Punjabi and authored several books on Dalit Christian theology. He defined Dalit Christian theology, which emerged in late 1970s, as a reflection of the Dalit Christians, who form the vast majority of the Indian Christian population, becoming increasingly conscious of their Dalit roots, their Dalit condition and of being oppressed both within as well as outside the Church. One of his major contributions is the Dalit Bible Commentary.

Prof. Ninan Koshy died in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala on 4 March 2015 at the age of 81. He was an expert on foreign affairs and theologian and was Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA) director. He joined the WCC staff as executive secretary of the CCIA in July 1974 and served as its Director from 1981 to 1991. He left an indelible mark on the WCC and the wider ecumenical movement with his incisive analyses of global issues and his theological insights on the churches' responsibility to witness for truth, justice and peace in a deeply troubled world. He became deeply involved in the World Student Christian Federation (WSCF), especially among its national movements in Asia. In 1973 he joined the staff of the Ecumenical Christian Centre, Whitefield, Bangalore and served first as its Associate Director and then as Director-in-Charge. In Geneva he assumed responsibility for the program on militarization and the armaments race organizing a series of international ecumenical consultations that broke new ground, for example in identifying militarization as an underlying cause of war and conflict. The definition of militarism developed there was subsequently applied by the United Nations in its Commission on Human Rights. At a critical moment in the nuclear arms race he organized, together with Paul Abrecht, Director of the WCC Department of Church and Society, the Public Hearing on Nuclear Weapons and Disarmament held in Amsterdam in 1981, and co-edited its report, Before It's Too Late. WCC General Secretary Philip Potter reported its findings directly to the plenary of Second Special Session of the UN General Assembly on Disarmament (SSDII) in New York in 1982 where they proved to be influential. Upon "retirement" from the WCC Prof. Koshy accepted an invitation to become a Visiting Fellow in the Human Rights Program of the Harvard Law School in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Back at home in India he became a fellow of the Faculty of Law at the University of Delhi, taught at other universities, was granted an honorary doctorate in theology by Serampore University and was named member of the Kerala University Senate. He remained devoted to the ecumenical movement and at the request of the Christian Conference of Asia he edited the two-volume work, A History of the Ecumenical Movement in Asia, published in 2004. His written production in books, newspapers, and periodical journals was prodigious and appeared regularly, and right up to the day he died he was still writing and at work on new projects.

Rev. Wilfried Warneck has passed away on 10 March 2015 at the age of 85 in Diemelstadt-Wethen, Germany. He was a long-time member of the community, the Laurentiuskonvent, which is an ecumenical community of families and singles striving to personify the fellowship and a diaconal vision of the church. He served as executive secretary of organisations such as the social service agency *Förderergemeinschaft Kinder in Not* (working among homeless children), *Weltfriedensdienst* (an overseas development organization) and *Eirene* (International Christian Service for Peace). He was one of the founders of the platform for Christian peace services in Germany, the Action Committee Service for Peace (*Aktionsgemeinschaft Dienst für den Frieden*). From 1975 to 1990, he expanded and inspired the work of *Church and Peace*, a European ecumenical network of communities from religious orders or

groups of families, of parishes, peace movements, peace services and training centres founded by the historical peace churches and the International Fellowship of Reconciliation. In 1992, along with others, he founded the organization "peace diaconate", known today under the new name of "acting without violence" (gewalt*frei* handeln). He was known for his tireless engagement to challenge the churches to commit themselves to a biblical life of nonviolence and justice and was a spokesperson of the members of Church and Peace with the message that objecting to the use of armed force and service for peace are at the very heart of the church's witness and calling.

Rev. Dr Thomas Hopko, Orthodox Church in America, passed away in March 2015. Fr Hopko was Dean Emeritus of St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, respected theologian, preacher, and long-time professor of the CrossRoad Summer Institute at Hellenic College. He was well-known both in Orthodox and ecumenical circles. He served as a member of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches and as a delegate from the Orthodox Church in America to the Assemblies of WCC in Uppsala, Sweden and Nairobi, Kenya. He was also President of the Orthodox Theological Society in America (1992–95).

On 26 March 2015, **His Holiness Mar Dinkha IV**, 111th Catholicos-Patriarch of the apostolic see of Seluecia-Ctesiphon and supreme head of the Assyrian Church of the East died in Chicago, USA. The Patriarch for almost 39 years, he was a good shepherd and provided an example of the Christian virtues of humility and Christ-like compassion. Born Khananya d'Bet Mardinkha in Darbandokeh, Harir, Iraq in 1935, he was ordained to the deaconate by Mar Yosip Khnanisho in 1947 and served as priest since July 15, 1957, later being consecrated bishop in Iran in 1962 by the late His Holiness Mar Eshai Shimun XXIII, Catholicos-Patriarch. He served as bishop for 14 years, until his election as Catholicos-Patriarch in 1976. Patriarch Dinkha is credited with rebuilding the church, which had neared the brink of destruction after the assassination of his predecessor. He translated portions of the liturgy from classical Assyrian (Syriac) to modern Assyrian and brought stability and peace to a church in turmoil. Under his reign, the Church of the East signed a Common Christological Declaration with the Roman Catholic Church, then headed by Pope John Paul II.

Father Bernard Diafouka, Orthodox Church of Congo, passed away in France on 27 March 2015. He came to know and embrace Orthodoxy through the first missionary and later first indigenous priest of the Congo, and in 1988 he was consecrated a Reader and sub-Deacon by the late Metropolitan Irenaios of Accra. In 1974 was ordained Deacon and Presbyter by the late Petros Metropolitan of Cameroon, who later became Patriarch of Alexandria (1997-2004). In 2013 he received the office of Protopresbyter and consecrated a Confessor by His Grace Panteleimon, Bishop of Congo-Brazzaville and Gabon. Originating from the Republic of Congo-Brazzaville, he was very involved in the struggle against HIV epidemic and was a key resource person in Central Africa regional reference group (RRG) of WCC-EHAIA.

Rev. Dr Philip A. Potter died on 31 March 2015 at the age of 93 in Lübeck, Germany. Third general secretary of the WCC (1972-1984), he brought the ecumenical body to international attention in his leadership of its campaign against racism. A native of Dominica, Potter a global ecumenical leader known for accompanying churches around the world in their struggles for unity, justice and peace. He began his ecumenical involvement as part of the student Christian movement in the Caribbean. He also served as staff of the Methodist Missionary Society in London. He represented the Jamaica Student Christian Movement at the 1947 world conference on Christian youth in Oslo, Norway. He was a youth representative to the first two assemblies of the WCC at Amsterdam in 1948 and Evanston in the United States in 1954. Among the most memorable achievements of Potter's tenure were the theological consensus document on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry and the continuation of a courageous campaign against apartheid in Africa and against other forms of racism throughout the world. He made

significant contributions to the vigorous debate on the nature of post-colonial Christian mission and evangelism. Potter was an active participant in every WCC assembly from 1948 to the 9th Assembly at Porto Alegre, Brazil (2006).

Rev. Dr Gardner Taylor, an African-American Baptist pastor and civil rights leader 5 April, passed away at age 96 in New York, USA. A close confidante to Martin Luther King Jr., he and other younger ministers frustrated by the older generation's reluctance to engage politically in the civil rights movement founded the Progressive National Baptist Convention. Known for his inspiring sermons, Taylor was honoured numerous times as one of America's best preachers. In addition to his advocacy for civil rights, Taylor was also a passionate champion for the separation of church and state and religious liberty for all. In 2000 President Clinton awarded him the Presidential Medal of Freedom. The Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty named him recipient of their J.M. Dawson Religious Liberty Award in 2010.

On 17 April 2015 **Prof. Dr Elizabeth Templeton**, Church of Scotland, died after a short illness at the age of 69. She was one of the foremost Scottish theologians of her time. She spent ten years teaching philosophy of religion at New College in Edinburgh University, and could have retained a role as an influential figure in academic life. Instead she opened in Edinburgh a centre for theological exploration, called Threshold, where a wide variety of people dropped in to discuss theology in relation to their everyday problems. Dr Templeton became much sought-after as a speaker at conferences and gave one of the four major responses to the opening address by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Robert Runcie, at the Church of England's Lambeth Conference in 1988. She was also the keynote speaker at the Fifth World Conference on Faith and Order, Santiago de Compostela 1993. In 1994 she chaired a working party of the Church of Scotland's Panel on Doctrine on the theology of marriage, which took a very sympathetic view of homosexuals. This was accepted by general assembly. She was known for her gift for communicating difficult theological concepts to lay people as well as the ability to engage other scholars in dialogue.

Rev. James R. Crumley Jr., bishop of the former Lutheran Church in America, died on 7 April 2015 at the age of 90. The Lutheran Church in America is a predecessor church body of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). In 1974 he was elected secretary of the Lutheran Church in America, president of the church 1978-1980 and then bishop 1980-1987. He was a member of the Commission for a New Lutheran Church, which planned the merger of three churches – Lutheran Church in America, American Lutheran Church and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches – to form the ELCA in January 1988. He also served as a member of the executive committee of The Lutheran World Federation and a member of the central committee of the World Council of Churches. He was president of Lutheran World Ministries and second vice president of the National Council of Churches.

Ms Vale Lucy Griffiths, Churches of Christ, passed away on 1 May 2015 at the age of 84 in Australia. In 1956 she was appointed part-time secretary of the recently formed Australian Christian Youth Commission, sharing her time assisting the secretary of the newly formed Victorian Council of Churches. She served as WCC secretary for youth projects in 1961 and continued her ecumenical involvement in Africa, the United Kingdom and then back in Australia. In the 1990s she reviewed a book on the life of Madeline Barot, who was a leader in the French churches, and who had also been on WCC staff when she was in Geneva.

Rev. Dr Somen Das, Church of North India, passed away on 5 May 2015. He was Professor of Christian Ethics at the United Theological College, Bangalore and Principal of Bishops College, Kolkata and contributed significantly to theological education and ecumenism in India. He served as chairperson of the Student Christian Movement of India (SCMI) 1985-1989. He was a committed and passionate

theological educator whose lifelong commitment to theological education spanned over 34 years of teaching in various colleges and seminaries. A prolific author, Dr Das wrote several books and contributed numerous articles in leading journals and books, including the WCC publication Asian Handbook for Theological Education and Ecumenism.

Rev. Robert (Bob) W. Andrews passed away 8 May 2015 at age 85. Educated at Wheaton (Ill.) College, Princeton Theological Seminary and the University of Pennsylvania, Andrews travelled widely, taught in Indonesia and marched with the Dr Martin Luther King Jr. in Birmingham in 1965. He twice was invited by Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat to consult with him in Beirut regarding U.S. public opinion on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, was a volunteer in the WCC refugee programme for the 1956 Hungarian uprising, and worked with the Carter administration for the release of political prisoners in Indonesia. In the 1960s he also served as special adviser to the Student Christian Movement of Indonesia and lecturer at the Jakarta Theological Seminary and Christian University of Indonesia. He organized the Society of American-Indonesian Friendship in the early 1970s and, in the end of that decade, the American Christians for Justice in Palestine.

Lay Canon Kodwo E. Ankrah, a great Pan-Africanist and ecumenist, died on 29 May 2015. Originally from the Methodist Church in Ghana, he was seconded to the Church of Uganda (Anglican) in 1970s in the Planning, Development and Rehabilitation Programme until his retirement. He served in leadership of the Christian Council of Ghana, the All Africa Conference of Churches and the World Council of Churches. He was well known for his commitment to ecumenism and humanity for traversing national boundaries, denominational identities and his deep engagement with the plight of refugees in Africa, especially in the Sudan. He is the author of Development and the Church of Uganda: Mission, Myths and Metaphors (Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 1998).

Fr Pasquale Foresi, Emeritus Co-President of the Focolare Movement, passed away on 4 June 2015 at his home close to the Movement's International Centre at Rocca di Papa, Italy. He was considered by many as a co-founder of the movement, sharing with Chiara Lubich, the founder the responsibility for the development and spreading of the movement in its early stages. He was the first focolarino to be ordained priest in 1954 and for many years, right up to 2008, he was the Movement's Co-President. His many written works and talks he gave are significant in presenting the theology of Chiara Lubich's charism and its newness with regard to life and thought.

Rt Rev. Dr A. George Ninan, Church of North India, former Associate General Secretary (1985-1990) and Executive Secretary for Urban Rural Mission (1979-1985) of the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) and former Bishop of Nasik Diocese of the Church of North India, passed away on 21 June 2015 in New York at age 82. He started his ecumenical journey through the Youth Christian Council of Action (YCCA) in Kerala, India during his student days, was actively involved in the Asian and global ecumenical movement for several decades. He played an important role in initiating Christian Action Groups in many parts of India in the 1970s, and was an ardent proponent of churches' participation in people's struggle for structural changes in an unjust society. He also served on the URM programme committees and various working groups of the WCC in 1980s. He was known to be an excellent organiser, visionary, theologian and practical ecumenist and a proponent of wider ecumenism and mission in a pluralistic Asia.

Rev. Angel Peiró, Evangelical Church of the Disciples of Christ in Argentina, died on 6 July 2015. As Secretary for Latin America and the Caribbean of the Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS) at the World Council of Churches 19801985, he contributed directly to a

mandate of the ecumenical movement to advocate for justice and peace in the world. He was known as a committed ecumenist who served the ecumenical movement faithfully.

Cardinal William W. Baum, a past Archbishop of Washington (1973-1980), died on 23 July 2015 at the age of 88. He was ordained a priest in 1951and named a monsignor in 1961. During the Second Vatican Council, he served as an advisor and Holy See later named him an expert, for the council. In that role he served under the Secretariat for Christian Unity. He participated in the drafting process of "Unitatis Redintegratio," the council's decree on ecumenism. Cardinal Baum was a leader in ecumenical and interreligious work and served on several joint groups and committees between the Catholic Church and bodies like the Joint Working Group of the WCC and the Roman Catholic Church (1965-1969) and the WCC and the Mixed Committee of representatives of the Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation (1965-66). From 1972-1975 he also was the chairman of the American Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs.

Mr Tony Waworuntu, Gereja Protestan di Indonesia bagian Barat (GPIB), a prominent church layman and ecumenical leader in Asia, and a member of the WCC central committee passed on 16 August 2015 at his home in Jakarta, Indonesia. He was known for being a tenacious supporter of people's movements and he accompanied people's struggles for human rights, justice and peace, freedom of religion and rights of persecuted minorities in various Asian countries. He served in the leadership of the Student Christian Movement in Indonesia and the Communion of Churches in Indonesia (PGI). Mr Waworuntu worked on various committees of Christian Conference of Asia at different times: as member of CCA executive and general committees as well as the International Affairs Program committee. He was on the staff of CCA for eight years 2000-2008 as executive secretary for Justice, International Affairs and Development (JID). He was also a member of the WCC Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (1999-2006) and a member of the Board of the Life and Peace Institute in Sweden. At the WCC 10th assembly in Busan he was elected to the central committee.

Rev. Dr Ruth Page, Church of Scotland, died on her 80th birthday on 15 September 2015. She served as senior lecturer in systematic theology at New College (1979-2000) and was the first woman appointed principal (1996-1999). She is seen as one of the first theologians to recognise the theological significance of the ecological crisis. She authored several books including "God and the Web of Creation". She served on the WCC central committee between the Canberra and Harare assemblies and was involved in studies on various issues including mission and HIV/AIDS.

Rev. Prof. Dr Theodor Ahrens, passed away at the age of 75 on 16 September 2015 in Hamburg, Germany. Born in Koraput, India where his father was a missionary, he studied theology and was ordained in 1969. After serving as head of studies at the Mission Academy of the University of Hamburg, he moved to Papua New Guinea (1971-1978) where he pastored and founded, along with others, the Melanesian Institute for Pastoral and Socio-Economic Service. He returned to Germany where he worked at the Nordelbian Mission Centre as the programme officer first for India and then for Papua New Guinea. He was professor of Missiology and Ecumenics at the Faculty of Theology at the University of Hamburg until 2005 and remained connected to missiology and the ecumenical movement through research and presentations. At the Centre for Mission and Ecumenism, he was head of the East Asia Committee. He was committed to ecumenical collaboration and also helped to prepare the way for intense dialogue with people of other faiths and even with secular partners. Later he served as chairman of the Mission Academy's board. The number of his publications was considerable even after his retirement. He was known as one of the leading missiologists and ecumenists, and a long-time partner with the WCC through research and teaching.

Bishop Taranath Sugnanam Sagar, Methodist Church in India, passed away on 19 October 2015. He was the senior bishop of the church and member of the WCC central committee since the 2006 Porto Alegre Assembly. Bishop Sagar was one of the prominent ecumenical leaders from India, who not only provided leadership to the Methodist Church in India, first as its general secretary and later as the presiding bishop of the Methodist Bishop Conference in India, but also to national and global ecumenical bodies. He was the president of National Council of Churches (NCCI) for two consecutive terms. He served on the World Methodist Council as a member of the Ecumenical Relationships Standing Committee and was an advocate for on-going dialogue between the WMC and other Christian faith traditions. He was also recently elected to the executive committee of the Christian Conference of Asia in its assembly in Indonesia in 2015. He was the president of the Asian Methodist Bishops Conference. He played a significant role in providing leadership particularly as a strong member of the working group on governance, helping to revise the WCC constitution and rules.

Bishop Emeritus Aldo Etchegoyen, Evangelical Methodist Church of Argentina (IEMA), died on 1 November 2015 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, leaving a legacy of strong commitment to human rights and the ecumenical movement. He was 86. In 1959 he graduated in theology from the Evangelical Theological Faculty of Buenos Aires and was ordained in 1960 and served as a pastor in several congregations. He also did post-graduate studies at the Ecumenical Institute of Bossey, Switzerland, between 1969 and 1970. He was known for his expressive voice advocating for strong involvement of the Council on issues of social ethics. He was very active in the search for unity in his own confessional family. He was the chairperson (1983-1989) and then general secretary (2001-2008) of the Council of Evangelical Methodist Churches of Latin America and Caribbean; and chairperson of the Council of Methodist Bishops of Latin America (1990-1997). He was one of the founding members of the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights of Argentina (APDH) and was appointed in 2000 by the Chamber of Deputies of the Province of Buenos Aires as a member of the Provincial Commission for Memory. He received the Human Rights Award of Argentina in 1997 and the Love Life Award from the United Nations Association of Argentina in 2001. He was a member of the WCC central committee (1998-2006). He has written numerous articles on theological issues, human rights, interfaith and ecumenical relations in national and international publications.

Dr Gottfried Oosterwal died on 9 November 2015 in Michigan, USA. He grew up in Rotterdam during World War II, was educated in theology and anthropology at Cambridge University and earned a PhD from the University of Utrecht in 1956. He was an Adventist missionary in Papua New Guinea (PNG) and taught at Philippine Union College, an Adventist institution. He had a key role in the creation of the World Mission Institute which prepares missionary families for cross cultural assignments. Later, after retiring from full-time teaching, he also founded the Center for Intercultural Relations which helped people to understand ethnic diversity both at home and abroad.

Rev. Ralph C. Young, Uniting Church of Canada, died on the 26th of November in Geneva, Switzerland, at the age of 100. As a youth he worked for the Maritime Religious Education Council and the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), and later became secretary of the UCC's Board of Men. He began working for the WCC in 1961 as executive secretary of their department of the laity, and was co-editor of the periodical "Laity." During a re-structuring of the WCC in 1971, with the integration of the World Council of Christian Education, the Laity department was absorbed in the Sub-unit on Renewal and Congregational Life. In 1980, Young retired from the WCC. In 1983, Young accepted the Geneva Secretary position with the World Methodist Council, a position which expanded the Council's presence in the world and fostered ecumenical ties forming the basis of future dialogues. He served in that position until 2001.

Rt Rev. Neville Wordsworth de Souza, the 12th Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Jamaica and the Cayman Islands, passed away on 12 December 2015 at his home in Mandeville, Jamaica at the age of 87. He was noted not only for his mission in the Diocese which he headed but for his ecumenical service which led him to election to leadership positions in other denominations and organisations locally and overseas. He served as chairman of the Caribbean Conference of Churches 1972-1981 and as an executive member of the Jamaica Council of Churches and a member of the WCC central committee. He was known for his outspokenness in addressing social issues of the day in the explosive era of the 1970s, he did not hesitate to speak in the name of the Gospel.

Rev. Robert F. (Bob) Smylie, Presbyterian Church USA, died on 19 December 2015 at the age of 87. He served as associate for peace and international affairs for the former United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. from 1976 to 1987. He was a visiting professor at the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey and later was made director of the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations, retiring in 2002. Smylie was later named director emeritus of the ministry at the U.N. by the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board.

Rev. Prof. Dr Karl Wilhelm Rennstich, passed away on 19 December 2015 at the age of 78 years in Reutlingen, Germany. After a vocational training in mechanics, he studied Protestant theology in Wuppertal and Basel. From 1965 to 1972 he served as missionary in Sabah, Malaysia. In the following he taught at the Trinity College in Singapore. After his return to Germany, he was appointed director of the Mission Academy in Hamburg. In 1992 he established the pastoral formation centre in Bad Urach. After his retirement he remained active in contributing to the debate around mission, ecumenism and development and he continued to publish extensively. Among his recent publications is a book on corruption from the perspective of world religions.

H.G. Abune Diyoskoros, Bishop of Seraye, Eritrean Orthodox Tewahedo Church, passed away on 21 December 2015. Following the arrest and imprisonment in 2005 of Abune Antonios, third Patriarch of the Eritrean Orthodox Tewahedo Church, the government encouraged the Holy Synod of the Eritrean Church in April 2007 to remove Abune Antonios from office and appoint as his successor Abune Diyoskoros. Other churches, including the Coptic Orthodox Church, have refused to recognize the legitimacy of this succession. The WCC never formally accepted the leadership of Bishop Diyoskoros as patriarch. In October 2014 the Union of Eritrean Monasteries issued a decree excommunicating Dioskoros' governmental allies, a priest and a layman, citing a long list of alleged abuses. However Dioskoros was not directly excommunicated.

His Eminence the **Rt Rev. Dr Zacharias Mar Theophilus**, Suffragan Metropolitan of the Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church died on 27 December 2015 in Thiruvananthapuram, India. Zacharias served as Diocesan Bishop in different dioceses of India and then as Bishop of the North America-Europe Diocese of the Mar Thoma Church, based in New York, USA (1993-2003). His Eminence attended the WCC assemblies in Canberra, Harare, Porto Alegre and Busan and he served as a member of the WCC central and executive committees for two terms (1991-1998 and 1999-2006). He was also a member of the Special Commission on Orthodox Participation in the WCC, was on the WCC Asia Regional Group (1999-2006) and the WCC-CCA (Christian Conference of Asia) Joint Working Group. He represented the WCC in various ecumenical and pastoral solidarity visits as part of the Decade to Overcome Violence (2001-2010).

Rev. Dr Robert C. Lodwick, Presbyterian Church USA, passed away in California, USA in January 2016 at the age of 90. At a young age he served as the Presbyterian representative on the World Student Christian Federation Committee. In 1948, he went to Europe to participate in WCC work camps in Italy, Switzerland, Germany and Holland. After finishing seminary he applied to the Board of Foreign Mission

and in 1953 was assigned to work with the French Reformed Church's CIMADE. He also spent many years in Egypt as technical advisor and then programme director for education with the board of management of Evangelical Schools of the Synod of the Coptic Evangelical Church (1964-1978). He then served in Geneva as the PCUSA area associate for Europe and the Middle East. He volunteered with the AIDS Interfaith Ministry and then was the coordinator for General Council Meeting of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches held in 1987 in Debrecen, Hungary. Several times before, he had coordinated the assembly visitors' programmes for the WCC.

Prof. Vasil T. Istavridis, born in Istanbul, Turkey in 1925, passed away in February 2016. He was an eminent church historian who taught at the Theological School of Chalki, Istanbul (Ecumenical Patriarchate). He was among the first Orthodox scholars to teach, since the early 50s, History of the Ecumenical Movement and to write a manual on the subject (in Greek). Proliferous writer, he had nearly 1000 publications (in Greek, English, French, German and Italian). Professor Istavridis had actively participated in the life of the WCC as a delegate of his church to assemblies, member of the central committee and member of consultative bodies, namely the Bossey Board. As a member of the Synodical Committees for Inter-Church relations and for Theological Studies, he followed closely and supported the work of the WCC. Respected for his wide knowledge and his gentle character, he was invited to teach at the Schools of theology of St John of Damascus, in Balamand, Lebanon, St Andrew the Apostle in Sydney, Australia, and the Faculty of theology of Thessaloniki, Greece.

Rev. Chief Albert Toburua, United Church in Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands passed away in February 2016. He served as the third moderator of the church.

His Grace Abune Nathnael, Archbishop of Arsi Diocese, Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, passed away on 29 February 2016 at the age of 85. He was a popular preacher whose messages were broadcasted over the radio for a number of years while he was a monk. He also served in the civil service and was a researcher in languages at the Ministry of Culture. He served as a teacher of Ethics in a number of high schools. He became a Deacon in 1946 and ordained a Priest, Monk in 1962. Obtaining his Diploma from St George's Anglican College in Jerusalem, he joined the Oxford University's College of Oshetrop in 1969 and obtained a Bachelor of Divinity. He was consecrated as a Bishop in 1979 and became the Archbishop of Arsi Diocese in 1983 where he served until the end of his life. He built over 400 parishes, clinics, schools and ran a popular Orphanage Centre across his Diocese. Environmental rehabilitation, afforestation and caring for creation were his passion. He also served in the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches. Elected by the Synod, he also served as the care taker Patriarch for 6 months following the death of His Holiness Abune Paulos I, Patriarch of Ethiopia in August 2012.

Mr John Kamau Cauri, Presbyterian Church of East Africa, died in March 2016 in Kenya. He was the first African general secretary of the Council of the National Council of Churches of Kenya and actively worked for the liberation of Kenyans during the colonial period. He was known for his Christian outreach and love for education. He was constantly on a mission to empower society. In the 1970 he served on the WCC governing bodies. Through his efforts the NCCK spread across the country with very strong networks at grassroots level, which has contributed enormously to the churches' advocacy and capacity building interventions. The council's national presence has its roots on his keen interest to bring churches together to fight vices which were working against the ordinary citizens.

Bishop Emeritus Manas Buthelezi, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa, a great African theologian of the 20th century, died on 20 April 2016 at the age of 81. He served on the LWF executive committee and council (1993-1997), participated in the LWF Assembly in Dar-es-Salaam (1977) where

he offered a seminar on the unity of the church demonstrating how apartheid had distorted true Christian unity by instituting segregation based on race. He was a member of the Faith and Order Commission and was a member of the steering group for the study which resulted in the F&O paper, "Church and World – The Unity of the Church and the Renewal of Human Community" (1990). Buthelezi was a keynote speaker at the LWF assembly in Curitiba in 1990 and was appointed to the LWF Standing Committee on International Affairs and Human Rights in 1993. A leading exponent of Black Theology and advocate for voiceless South Africans during the apartheid regime, he played a major role in the South African Council of Churches, the All Africa Conference of Churches and the World Council of Churches.

Rt Rev. Francis Nabieu, Methodist Church of Sierra Leone, died suddenly in a road accident in May 2016 at the age of 60. He played a very active role both as a member of his church and in the Sierra Leone Council of Churches, notably the important role he played during the political crisis in Sierra Leone. He was known as a pastor of the people, remaining in the country during the 11-year war in his country when many church leaders left. He was an active ecumenical leader in his country through his leadership role in the Sierra Leone Council of Churches; he also served in the general committee of the All Africa Conference of Churches and participated in the WCC 8th Assembly in Harare, Zimbabwe in 1998. He was a distinguished peacemaker and an eloquent speaker. He will be missed not only by his church but also by the ecumenical family because of his service to humanity.

Rev. Charles R. (Chuck) Harper, Presbyterian Church USA, died on 25 May 2016 in Saint Hilaire d'Ozihan, France. Following studies in theology and international affairs he became a United Presbyterian fraternal worker in France assigned during the early 1960s to the ecumenical Committee for Assistance to Evacuees (CIMADE). Later, as director of the John Knox International Reformed Centre in Geneva and a fluent speaker of Portuguese, he aided church leaders who were persecuted in Mozambique, Angola and Cape Verde. As coordinator of the WCC resource office on human rights in Latin America, Harper was instrumental in the gathering, compilation and preservation of Brazilian documentation from the period of military government in his native land from 1964 to 1985. In 2011, a copy of this archive from Geneva was turned over to the attorney general of Brazil and made available to the public on an Internet website titled "Brasil: Nunca Mais Digital" (Brazil: Never Again-digital). In 2010, the president of Chile made Harper a Grand Officer of the Order Bernando O'Higgins. In 2014, the Argentine president conferred on him the highest civilian decoration, Order Comendador de Mayo, in honour of his work for human rights in Latin America. Among his books are O Acompanhamento: Ecumenical Action for Human Rights in Latin America 1970-1990 (WCC Publications, 2006) and Escape from Portugal: The Church in Action – The Flight of 60 African Students to France (Chalice Press, 2015).

Bishop Emeritus Federico José Pagura, Evangelical Methodist Church of Argentina, passed away at the age of 93 on 6 June 2016. As pastor of the Methodist church in Mendoza, he led the reception to Chilean refugees fleeing the coup and the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet, and was one of the founders of the Ecumenical Committee for Social Action (CEAS) that welcomed thousands of people of that country. Elected bishop of the Evangelical Church in Argentina in 1977, he was an outstanding leader of the Ecumenical Movement for Human Rights (MEDH) and worked closely with the WCC Human Rights Office for Latin American, opposing the blatant violations perpetrated by the Argentinean military dictatorship. He served as president of the Latin American Evangelical Christian Education Commission (CELADEC). Between the world mission conferences in Melbourne (1980) and San Antonio (1898), he participated in the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism. He also served 17 years as president of the Latin American Council of Churches (CLAI). In December 1998, at the WCC Eighth Assembly held in Harare, Pagura was elected one of the WCC presidents and thereafter became an active promoter of the Decade for Overcoming Violence in Latin America. At WCC central committee meetings, he insisted on the

theme of the Eucharist and the unity of Christians around the Lord's Table, and frequently denounced the sins of empire. He was also a member of the board of the Life and Peace Institute, based in Uppsala, another example of its universal ecumenical vocation. Bishop Pagura is also known for his many songs and poems that speak of their rejection of injustice and his mourning at the suffering of the poorest and helpless. One of the better known is 'Por eso es que tenemos esperanza' (Why we have hope), sung in countless ecumenical gatherings.

Dr Elisabeth Moltmann-Wendel, a pioneering feminist theologian, died 7 June 2016, aged 89. In her work she explored the importance of embodiment for reframing our notions of God, human relationships, and sexuality. She was author of, among other works, Freedom, Equality, and Sisterhood (1978), The Women around Jesus (1982), A Land Flowing with Milk and Honey (1986), I Am My Body (1995), and Rediscovering Friendship: Awakening to the Power and Promise of Women's Friendships (2001). Married in 1952, she also authored several pieces with her husband, Jürgen Moltmann, including Humanity in God (1983), God – His and Hers (1991), and Passion for God: Theology in Two Voices (2003).

Rev. Dr Kuruvilla Cherukara Abraham, Church of South India, a well-known Christian theologian and ecumenist from India passed away on 12th June 2016 in Bangalore, India. A Presbyter of the Church of South India, Dr Abraham, or KC as he was popularly known, was Director of the South Asia Theological Research Institute [SATHRI] – a programme of the Senate of Serampore College. In a distinguished academic career spanning several decades Dr Abraham was a much sought after theological educator. He taught at the United Theological College, Bangalore and held visiting professorships in several theological institutions across the world including the Mackay Chair in World Christianity (1993-1994) in his alma mater the Princeton Theological Seminary. Dr Abraham was one of the pioneers of third world liberation theologies and served as president of the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians. He also edited EATWOT's journal Voices from the Third World. An author of several books and articles Dr Abraham served on several committees of the Christian Conference of Asia and the WCC. In recognition of his contributions the Senate of Serampore College conferred on him the Degree of Doctor of Divinity (Honoris Causa) in 2014.

Rev. Dr Ruth Epting died in Basel on 16 June 2016 at the age of 97. She was a founding member of the Ecumenical Forum of European Christian Women. The EFECW sprang from WCC's Women in Church and Society in 1982 when the then Director of the programme challenged the European Christian women on the need to be united so as to have more lasting impact in their pursuit for justice and peace. The Ruth Epting fund was set up for women to give and receive to ensure the future of the forum. The fund tries to ensure that women, especially those new to ecumenical engagement, can share in the experiences of the forum and that all countries are adequately represented when decisions are made.